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Inci Öykü YENER-RODERBURG

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**DIASPORAS' POLITICAL MOBILISATION FOR
A 'HOMELAND' POLITICAL PARTY**
*THE CASE OF TURKEY'S PEOPLES' DEMOCRATIC PARTY
IN GERMANY AND FRANCE*

THÈSE dirigée par :
Mme. Kader KONUK   Université de Duisburg-Essen
M. Samim AKGÖNÜL   Université de Strasbourg

Rapporteurs :
M. Hamit BOZARSLAN   Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales
M. Jean-Michel LAFLEUR   Université de Liège

Autres Members du Jury :
Mme. Birte WASSENBERG   Université de Strasbourg
M. Andreas BLÄTTE   Université de Duisburg-Essen

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List of Acronyms

AABF Alevi Federation Germany (Turkish: *Avrupa Alevi Birlikleri Federasyonu*, German: *Alevitische Gemeinde Deutschland*)

AABK Confederation European Alevi Unions (Turkish: *Avrupa Alevi Birlikleri Konfederasyonu*)

ACORT (l'Acort) Citizen Assembly of the People from Turkey (French: *L'Assemblée Citoyenne des Originaires de Turquie,* Turkish: *Türkiyeli Yurttaşlar Meclisi*)

ACTIT (aka ATT) Cultural Association of Migrant Workers from Turkey (French: *l'Association culturelle des travailleurs immigrés de Turquie*)

ADHK European Confederation of Democratic Rights (Turkish: *Avrupa Demokratik Haklar Konfederasyonu*)

ADÜTDF Turkish Federation in Germany, ATF's new name since 2007 (Turkish: *Almanya Demokratik Ülkücü Türk Dernekleri*)

AGD Alevi Federation Germany (German: *Alevitische Gemeinde Deutschland*)

AGIF German Federation of Migrant Workers (Turkish: *Almanya Göçmen İşçiler Federasyonu*)

AKP Justice and Development Party (Turkish: *Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi*)

ANAP Motherland Party (Turkish: *Anavatan Partisi*)

AP Justice Party (Turkish: *Adalet Partisi*)

ASTU (aka ASSTU) International Civic Actions (French: *l'Actions citoyennes interculturelles*)

ATF Turkish Federation in Germany (Turkish: *Almanya Türk Federasyonu*)

ATIK Confederation of Workers from Turkey in Europe (Turkish: *Avrupa Türkiyeli İşçiler Konfederasyonu*)

ATO Ankara Chamber of Commerce (Turkish: *Ankara Ticaret Odası*)

AVKAR European Kareli Association (Turkish: *Avrupa Kareliler Derneği*)

BDP Party for Peace and Democracy (Turkish: *Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi,* Kurdish: Partiya Aştî û Demokrasiyê)

BfV Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution (German: *Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz)*

CCMTF Committee for Coordination of Turkish Muslims in France (French: *Le Comité de coordination des Musulmans Turcs de France*)

CDK-F Kurdish Democratic Council in France (French: *Conseil Démocratique kurde en France*)

CDU Christian Democratic Union (German: *Christlich Demokratische Union*)

CFCM French Council of Muslim Worship (French: *Conseil Français du Culte Musulman*)

CHF Republican People's Party (Turkish: *Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası,* former name of the CHP)

CHP Republican People's Party (Turkish: *Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi*), formerly known as the Republican People's Party (Turkish: *Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası,* CHF)

CGP Republican Reliance Party (Turkish: *Cumhuriyetçi Güven Partisi*)

CIMG	Islamic Confederation of Mili Görüş (French: *la confédération Islamique Mili Görüş*)
CÎK	Islamic Society of Kurdistan (Kurdish: *Civaka Îslamiya Kurdistan*)
CKMP	Republican Peasants' Nation Party, or Republican Villagers Nation Party (Turkish: *Cumhuriyetçi Köylü Millet Partisi*)
CMP	Cumhuriyetçi Millet Partisi (Turkish: *Republican Nation Party*)
CSU	Christian Social Union (German: *Christlich-Soziale Union*)
DBP	Democratic Regions Party (Turkish: *Demokratik Bölgeler Partisi;* Kurdish: *Partiya Herêman a Demokratîk*)
DDKO	Revolutionary Cultural Hearths of the East (Turkish: *Doğu Devrimci Kültür Ocakları,* Kurdish: *Civîngehên Çandî yên Şoreşgerê Rojhilat*)
DEHAP	Democratic People's Party (Turkish: *Demokratik Halk Partisi,* Turkish: *Partiya Gel a Demokratîk*)
DEP	Democracy Party (Turkish: *Demokrasi Partisi,* Kurdish: *Partiya Demokrasiyê*)
DEVA	Democracy and Progress Party (Turkish: *Demokrasi ve Atılım Partisi*)
Diyanet	Directorate of Religious Affairs (Turkish: *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*)
DIDF	Federation of Democratic Workers' Associations (Turkish**:** *Demokratik İşçi Dernekleri Federasyonu,* German: *Föderation Demokratischer Arbeitervereine e.V.*)
DIDF-France	Federation of Democratic Workers' and Youth' Associations (Turkish: *Demokratik İşçi ve Gençlik Dernekleri Federasyonu,* French: *Fédération des Associations des Travailleurs et des Jeunes issus de l'immigration de Turquie*)
DISK	Confederation of Progressive Trade Unions of Turkey (Turkish: *Türkiye Devrimci İşçi Sendikaları Konfederasyonu*)
DITIB	Turkish-Islamic Union for Religious Affairs (Turkish: *Diyanet İşleri Türk İslam Birliği*)
DP	Democratic Party (Turkish: *Demokrat Parti*)
DSP	Democratic Left Party (Turkish: *Demokratik Sol Parti*)
DSIP	Revolutionary Socialist Workers' Party (Turkish: *Devrimci Sosyalist İşçi Partisi*)
DTH	Democratic Society Movement (Turkish: *Demokratik Toplum Hareketi*)
DTP	Democratic Society Party (Turkish: *Demokratik Toplum Partisi,* Kurdish: *Partiya Civaka Demokratîk*)
DYP	True Path Party (Turkish: *Doğru Yol Partisi*)
ECtHR	European Court of Human Rights
EMEP	Labour Party (Turkish: *Emek Partisi*)
ESP	Socialist Party of Oppressed (Turkish: *Ezilenlerin Sosyalist Partisi,* Kurdish: *Partiya Sosyalîst a Bindestan*)
EU	European Union
FEDA	Democratic Alevi Federation (Turkish: *Demokratik Alevi Federasyonu,* German: *Föderation der demokratischen Aleviten*)

FEDA-France	Democratic Alevi Federation-France (Kurdish: *Federasyona Demokratika Elewi*, FEDA-France)
FEKAR-Kurdistan	Federation of Kurdish Associations in Switzerland (Kurdish: *Fedarasyona Yekîtiya Komalen Gelê Kurd li Swîsra*)
FEK-BEL	Federation of the Kurdish Associations in Belgium (Turkish: *Belçika Kürt Dernekleri* Federasyonu)
FETÖ	Fetullahist Terrorist Organisation (Turkish: *Fetullahçı Terör Örgütü*)
FEYKA	Federation of Cultural Associations of the Patriotic Workers of Kurdistan (Kurdish: *Federasyona Komeleyên Kurd li Fransayê*, French: *Fédération des associations Kurdes de France*)
FIDEF	Federation of Workers' Associations in Federal Germany (Turkish: *Federal Almanya İşçi Dernekleri Federasyonu,* Kurdish: Federasyona Komelên Karkerên li Elmanya, German*: Föderation der ArbeiterInnenvereine in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland*)
FP	Virtue Party (Turkish: *Fazilet Partisi*)
FPTP	First-Past-The-Post
FUAF	Federation of Alevi Communities of France (French: *Fédération Union des Alévis en France*, Turkish: *Fransa Alevi Birlikleri Federasyonu*)
GP	Young Party (Turkish: *Genç Parti*)
HADEP	People's Democracy Party (Turkish: *Halkın Demokrasi Partisi,* Kurdish: *Partiya Demokrasiya Gel*)
HEP	People's Labour Party (Turkish: *Halkın Emek Partisi,* Kurdish: *Partiya Kedê ya Gel*)
HDF	Federation of People's Revolutionary Union (Turkish: *Sosyaldemokrat Halk Dernekleri Federasyonu,* German: *Föderation der Volksvereine Türkischer Sozialdemokraten e.V.*)
HDK	Peoples' Democratic Congress (Turkish: *Halkların Demokratik Kongresi*)
HDP	Peoples' Democratic Party (Turkish: *Halkların Demokratik Partisi,* Kurdish: *Partiya Demokratîk a Gelan*)
HKP	People's Liberation Party (Turkish: *Halkın Kurtuluş Partisi*)
HP	Liberty Party (Turkish: *Hürriyet Partisi*)
IDP	Reformist Democracy Party (Turkish: *Islahatçı Demokrasi Partisi*)
IGMG	Islamic Community Milli Görüş (Turkish: *İslam Toplumu Milli Görüş*, German: *Islamische Gemeinschaft Milli Görüş*)
IS (aka ISIL or ISIS)	Islamic State/Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant/Islamic State of Iraq and Syria
IYIP	Good Party (Turkish: *İyi Parti*)
KCDK-E	European Kurdish Democratic Societies Congress (Kurdish: *Kongreya Civakên Demokratîk a Kurdîstanîyên Ewrupa*)
KESK	Confederation of Public Workers' Unions (Turkish: *Kamu Emekçileri Sendikaları Konfederasyonu*)
KNC (aka KNK)	Kurdistan National Congress in the Diaspora (Kurdish: *Kongreya Neteweyî ya Kurdistanê*)
KOMKAR	Confederation of Associations from Kurdistan in Europe (Kurdish: *Konfederasyona Komeleyên Kurdistanê li Ewrûpa*)

KON-KURD	Confederation of Kurdish Associations in Europe (Kurdish: *Konfederasyona Komelên Kurd Li Avrupa*)
MÇP	Nationalist Work Party (Turkish: *Milliyetçi Çalışma Partisi*)
MDP	Nationalist Democracy Party (Turkish: *Milliyetçi Demokrasi Partisi*)
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Turkish: *Dışişleri Bakanlığı*)
MGK	National Security Council (Turkish: *Milli Güvenlik Konseyi*)
MHP	Nationalist Action Party (Turkish: *Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi*)
MKP	National Development Party (Turkish: *Milli Kalkınma Partisi*)
MSP	National Salvation Party (Turkish: *Milli Selamet Partisi*)
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NAV-DEM (aka YEK-KOM)	Federation of Kurdish Associations in Germany (Kurdish for NAV-DEM: *Navenda Civaka Demokratîk ya Kurdên li Almanyayê,* for YEK- KOM: *Yekitîya Komalên Kurd li Elmanya*)
NRW	North-Rhine Westphalia
OHAL	State of Emergency (Turkish: *Olağanüstü Hal*)
ÖDP	Freedom and Solidarity Party (Turkish: *Özgürlük ve Dayanışma Partisi*)
ÖZDEP	Freedom and Democracy Party (Turkish: *Özgürlük ve Demokrasi Partisi*)
ÖZDEP	Freedom and Democracy Party (Turkish: *Özgürlük ve Demokrasi Partisi*)
PEJ	Equality and Justice Party (French: *Parti égalité et justice*)
PKAN	Platform of Central Anatolia Kurds (Kurdish: *Platforma Kurdên Anatoliya Navîn*)
PÎK	Kurdistan Islamic Party (Kurdish: *Partiya İslamiya Kurdistan*)
PKK	Workers Party of Kurdistan (Kurdish: *Partîya Karkerên Kurdistan*, or Turkish: *Kürdistan İşçi Partisi* or *Apocular*)
PRI	Insitutional Revolutionary Party (Spanish: *Partido Revolucionario Institucional*)
PSD	Social Democratic Party (Portuguese: *Partido Social Democrata*)
PSK (aka PSKT)	Turkey Kurdistan Socialist Party (Turkish: *Türkiye Kürdistan Sosyalist Partisi*, Kurdish: *Partiya Sosyalista Kurdistan a Tırkiye*)
PTT	National Post and Telegraph Directorate of Turkey (Turkish: *Posta ve Telgraf Teşkilatı*)
PYD	Democratic Union Party (Kurdish: *Partiya Yekîtiya Demokrat*)
RP	Welfare Party (Turkish: *Refah Partisi*)
RPR	Rally for the Republic (French: *Rassemblement pour la République*)
RTUK (aka RTSC)	Radio and Television Supreme Council (Turkish: *Radyo ve Televizyon Üst Kurulu*)
SDP	Socialist Democracy Party (Turkish: *Sosyalist Demokrasi Partisi*)
SHP	Social Democratic Populist Party (Turkish: *Sosyaldemokrat Halkçı Parti*)
SKB	Union of the Socialist Women (Turkish: *Sosyalist Kadınlar Birliği*)
SKM	Election Coordination Centre (Turkish: *Seçim Koordinasyon Merkezi*)
SP	Felicity Party (Turkish: *Saadet Partisi*)
SPD	Social Democratic Party (German: *Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands*)
SYKP	Socialist Party of Refoundation (Turkish: *Sosyalist Yeniden Kuruluş Partisi*)

TBMM	Grand National Assembly of Turkey (Turkish: *Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi*)
TBP (aka BP)	Unity Party of Turkey (Turkish: *Türkiye Birlik Partisi*, until 1973 *Birlik Partisi*)
TDK	Turkish Language Society (Turkish: *Türk Dil Kurumu)*
THY	Turkish Airlines (Turkish: *Türk Hava Yolları*)
TİP	Workers' Party of Turkey (Turkish: *Türkiye İşçi Partisi*)
TJK-E	European Kurdish Women's Movement (Kurdish: *Tevgera Jinên Kurd li Ewropayê*, German: *Kurdische Frauenbewegung in Europa*)
T-KDP	Kurdistan Democratic Party of Turkey (Turkish: *Türkiye Kürdistan Demokratik Partisi* or *Şıvancılar* or *Dr. Şıvan Hareketi*)
TKP	Communist Party of Turkey (Turkish: *Türkiye Komünist Partisi*)
TMMOB	Union of Chambers of Turkish Engineers and Architects (Turkish: *Türk Mühendis ve Mimar Odaları Birliği*)
TSIP	Socialist Workers' Party of Turkey (Turkish: *Türkiye Sosyalist İşçi Partisi*)
TTB	Turkish Medical Association (Turkish: *Türk Tabipleri Birliği*)
UDF	Union for French Democracy (French: *l'Union pour la démocratie française*)
UID (aka UETD)	Union of European Turkish Democrats (Turkish: *Avrupa Türk Demokratlar Birliği*)
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
YEK-MAL	Association of Parents from Kurdistan in Germany (Kurdish: *Yekitiya Malbatên ji Kurdîstanê li Almanyayê*, German: *Verein der Eltern aus Kurdistan in Deutschland*)
YSK	Supreme Election Board of Turkey (Turkish: *Yüksek Seçim Kurulu*)
YTB	Presidency of Turks Abroad and Related Communities (Turkish: *T.C. Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı Yurtdışı Türkler ve Akraba Topluluklar Başkanlığı*)
YTP	New Turkey Party (Turkish: *Yeni Türkiye Partisi*)
YXK	Association of Students from Kurdistan (Kurdish: *Yekîtiya Xwendekarên Kurdistan*, German: *Verband der Studierenden aus Kurdistan*)

Maps

Map 1: Administrative units of contemporary Kurdistan

Source: the Kurdish Institute of Paris (2016)

Map 2: Kurdish populations in Europe
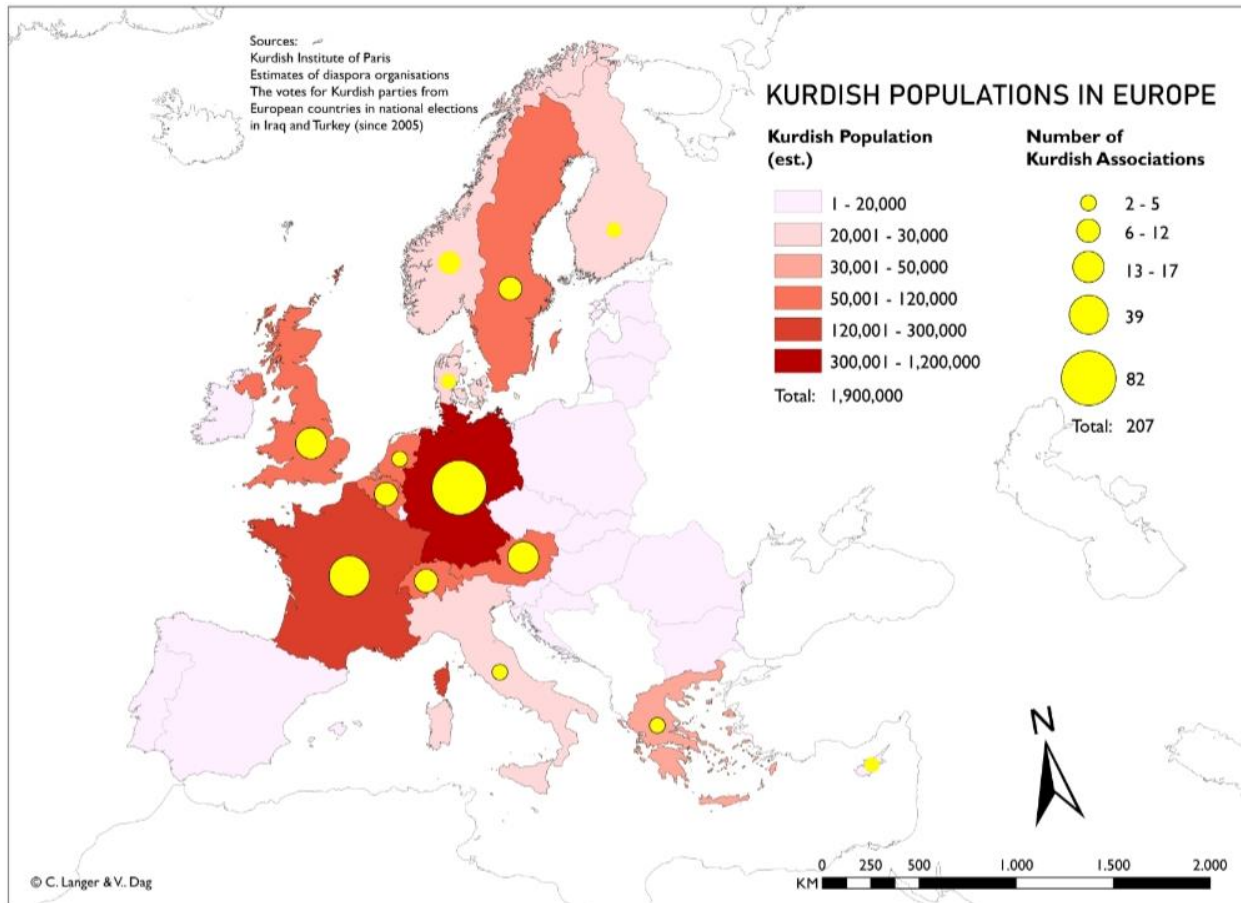
Source: Dag et al. (2021)

Introduction

1. Exploring political mobilisation for the HDP in Germany and France

On the evening of June 7, 2015, citizens of Turkey both within and outside the country were planted in front of their TVs: they were watching live broadcasts of the preliminary results of the 25th General Elections of Turkey, reported from Turkey's polling districts and – for the first time in a general election – also from out-of-country polling stations counted in Ankara. While ballots were counted, supporters of the two political parties with the most extraterritorial votes – the Justice and Development Party (Turkish: *Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi*, AKP) and the Peoples' Democratic Party (Turkish: *Halkların Demokratik Partisi*, HDP) – filled many European city squares with Kurdish chants and HDP flags,[1] or took to the roads in convoys to celebrate the news about the AKP's victory (Süddeutsche Zeitung 2015, June 8). Yet, when the results came in, they indicated an apparent mismatch between the preferences of in-country and out-of-country citizens; the AKP still had the leading position abroad, but the HDP was the second most voted party extraterritorially, whereas in-country it had the fourth spot (see Figure 1).

While by now around 130 countries allow their non-resident citizens to vote in general elections of their origin country (Arrighi & Bauböck, 2017; Collard, 2019; Peltoniemi et al., 2022), Turkey was a relative laggard in this regard, introducing external voting rights to its citizens abroad only in 2012 (see Table 1). Since then, 99 percent[2] of Turkish citizens abroad have had the right to vote in Turkish elections from within their country of residence. Reaching out to engage non-resident voters is one of the most significant overall challenges facing contemporary political parties. Nonetheless, as one of the last countries to have adopted external voting, Turkey stands out for its success in reaching more than 50 percent of the active non-resident voters, establishing six external voting events in less than four years (see Figure 2).

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[1] The video was filmed in Hildesheim, Germany (F.d, 2015, June 8).

[2] According to the Turkish electoral law, countries that have more than 500 registered Turkish nationals on their electoral roll shall have a polling station. Expatriates living in countries with fewer than this number comprise just 1 percent of non-resident citizens. These individuals are still eligible to vote and may do so either by returning to Turkey or by travelling to the nearest country with a polling station (Act No. 5749).

Figure 1. Results for the June 2015 and November 2015 Turkish elections for Turkey in total, domestic only, all non-resident voters, voters at border crossings, and those in Germany and France

Political Parties	Elections	Total ballots		Domestic ballots		Expatriates total ballots		Border crossings		Overseas ballots		Germany		France	
		%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#
AKP	*J 2015*	40.9	18,867,411	40.7	18,347,747	50.4	519,664	46.41	57,158	50.4	462,506	53.7	255,426	50.8	57,671
	Nov 2015	49.5	23,681,926	49.3	22,959,394	56.4	722,532	55.0	75,504	56.9	647,028	59.7	340,199	58.3	82,342
HDP	*J 2015*	13.1	6,058,489	12.9	5,847,134	21.4	211,355	11.8	14,528	21.4	196,827	17.5	83,250	29.6	33,667
	Nov 2015	10.8	5,148,085	10.6	4,914,203	19.2	233,882	10.1	13,823	19.2	220,059	15.9	90,808	25.8	36,504
CHP	*J 2015*	24.9	11,518,139	25.1	11,338,681	15.9	179,458	26.9	33,195	15.9	146,263	16.0	76,134	9.6	10,963
	Nov 2015	25.3	12,111,812	25.6	11,900,875	15.4	210,937	24.6	33,786	15.4	177,151	14.8	84,445	8.6	12,137
MHP	*J 2015*	16.3	7,520,006	16.4	7,423,555	9.1	96,451	10.5	12,994	9.1	83,457	9.7	46,281	7.0	7,980
	Nov 2015	11.9	5,694,136	12.0	5,602,469	7.1	91,667	7.7	10,591	7.1	81,076	7.5	42,710	7.5	7,480
Participation rate	*J 2015*	83.9	46,163,243	86.4	45,121,773	32.5	1,041,470	4.3	123,168	32.5	918,302	34.3	475,885	36.1	113,669
	Nov 2015	85.2	47,840,231	87.4	46,555,267	40.0	1,297,143	4.8	137,272	40.0	1,159,871	40.8	569,836	44.0	141,162

Source: Compiled by author using YSK (2020)

Table 1. Major legislation regulating the voting rights of non-resident Turkish citizens

Legislation	Year	Type of election	Amendment details
Act No. 3377 (Act Regarding Law on Basic Provisions on Elections and Electoral Roll No. 298, Art. No. 94)	23/05/1987 (1987)	Parliamentary	Emigrants' right to vote at borders in parliamentary elections is granted.
Act No. 4121 (Constitution Art. No. 67)	23/07/1995 (1995)	Parliamentary & Referenda	Emigrants' right to vote at borders in parliamentary elections and referenda are granted.
Act No. 5749 (Act Regarding Law on Basic Provisions on Elections and Electoral Roll No. 298)	13/03/2008 (2014)	All	County Electoral Board for Citizens Abroad and Electoral Roll for Citizens Abroad are established and emigrants' right to vote in their country of residence is granted.
Act No. 6271 (Act Regarding Law on Basic Provisions on Elections and Electoral Roll No. 298)	19/01/2011 (2014)	Presidential	Presidential elections are introduced, and emigrants' right to vote at the Turkish border crossings for presidential elections is granted.
Act No. 6304 (Act Regarding Law on Basic Provisions on Elections and Electoral Roll No. 298/20)	09/05/2012 (2014)	All	Tasks of the County Electoral Board for Citizens Abroad are defined in detail and regulation detailing operations of external voting is enacted.

Notes: Parentheses indicate the year of the first election to which the new regulation applied.
Source: Compiled by author using the Law on Basic Provisions on Elections and Electoral Roll, Turkish Constitution.

Figure 2. Turnout rates in the Turkish elections for all non-resident voters, voters at border crossings, and those in Germany and France (between 2011 and 2018)

Elections	Total number of registered external voters	Total number of casted votes	Voter turnout			
			Border crossings	Germany	France	External overall
June 2011 General*	2,568,979	129,283	5.0 %	-	-	5.0 %
August 2014 Presidential	2,798,726	530,116	10.0 %	8.2 %	8.4 %	18.9 %
June 2015, General	2,899,072	1,056,078	4.3 %	33.7 %	36.1 %	35.4 %
Nov. 2015 General	2,899,069	1,298,325	4.8 %	40.8 %	44.0 %	43.5 %
April 2017 Referendum	2,972,676	1,424,279	3.3 %	46.2 %	43.8 %	47.9 %
June 2018 General & Presidential	3,047,323	1,525,279	5.5 %	45.8 %	47.3 %	50.2 %

*Last election before enabling external voting.
Source: Compiled by author using YSK (2020)

Together, the AKP and the HDP received the support of a majority of non-resident voters in the June and November 2015 general elections, the first held after enacting remote enfranchisement in 2012. In this context, the questions of why and how the HDP has become successful have been frequently asked in the press and by experts. The theme of this study has emerged from my own curiosity regarding this issue. Were the HDP partisans more active, or were the grassroots networks more rooted, or were there differences in local voters' engagement with and support for the parties abroad and mobilisation of organisations? What is the motivation of the HDP's abroad supporters?

2. The rationale of the study

Turkey's political presence outside the country is a topic that has captured many scholars' attention for decades (Abadan-Unat, 2011; Adamson, 2019; Akgönül, 2017; Argun, 2017; Arkilic, 2020; Aydın, 2016; Bozarslan, 1997; Grojean, 2008; İçduygu et al., 2001; Mohseni, 2003; Mügge et al., 2019; Østergaard-Nielsen, 2003a, 2009, 2016; Rigoni, 1998; Şenay, 2012; Sirkeci, 2007). The existing literature recognises that Turkish immigrants and their descendants in Europe are socially, ethnically, religiously, and linguistically diverse. They immigrated to Europe under different conditions and motivations, mainly economic and political reasons combined with family reunifications.

Against this backdrop, this dissertation aims to address the following research question: As a historic political moment, how does external voting lead diaspora organisations in favour of a homeland political party?

To be able to answer this broad question using the conceptual framework of transnational diaspora mobilisation and external voting, I ask the following sub-questions regarding the remote HDP partisans in Germany and France throughout the first extraterritorial general election experiences:

1. How and why do diaspora organisations mobilise for a homeland political party during the electoral process from the countries in which they are based?
2. How does voting eligibility impact the patterns of political engagement in the case of external voting?

3. What incentives do diaspora organisations and individuals have to become pro-HDP alliances/partisans in Germany and France?

In order to respond to these questions, this thesis selects the HDP of Turkey as the case party. As a newly emerging party when the first general election that included expat voters took place in June 2015, and November 2015 the HDP altered the election results through its extraterritorial strength, receiving the fourth highest in-country votes while coming in second extraterritorially (see Graph 1).

Graph 1. Results of the vote share for the four most voted political parties in the June 2015 and November 2015 Turkish general elections
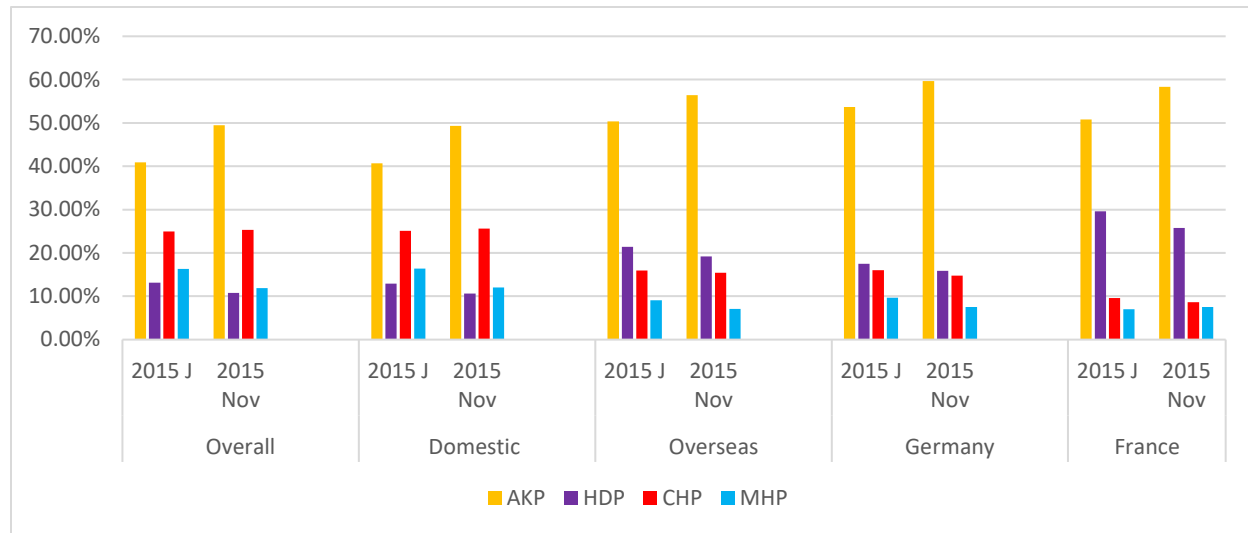
Source: Compiled by author using YSK (2020)

The party's strength cannot be limited to, though it is significantly related to, 'institutionalised' migrants, here meaning the migrants who are affiliated with any diasporic organisations, mainly consisting of partisan ethno-racial/ethno-sectarian identities. Nevertheless, this thesis does not reject the apparent effect of non-partisan groups' political engagements on the party's extraterritorial success.

Investigating the exterritorial electoral success of a newly established political party is suitable because it underlines that the abroad reach of the homeland political parties – which is by and large problematic for each homeland party – generates the unexpected result of equal ground in their remote-supporter mobilisation challenge. As a result of this, relatively fairer election competition gave birth to an unimaginable outcome in Turkey's case and extraterritorially: a

multi-cultural party (the HDP) has become the main opposition and stood against the ruling party. Furthermore, this success was reflected at the ballot box, and accordingly, back in the homeland, the vote share of this party broke the landslide victory of the ruling party, the AKP, and shook the dominant consensus that it had held for more than a decade (Jakobson et al., 2022; Umpierrez de Reguero et al., 2021; Yener-Roderburg, 2020).

By thus drawing out the consequent shift in the relation between the different factions that stemmed from different migration waves towards the destination countries, I attempt to move the discussion away from focusing on motivations for migrating and ethnic frames. However grossly accurate they might be, the parties' out-of-country organisational structures within which identities/migrant associations are also constructed following the out-of-county enfranchisement in 2012. This approach developed out of my empirical study of the migrant organisations' evolution. They were either initiated by the homeland political parties as their satellites, or the already existing ones increased/launched interest for the homeland political parties as alliances. However, this dissertation does not try to explain the satellite organisations of the political parties in residence countries, as this would divert the focus of this research from diaspora members to the political party's reach abroad. Rather, this research engages more with the response of the de-centralised diaspora organisations that did not face open external interference by any unit from their homeland in building their political stance. And this study claims that, following the introduction of external voting, some of the migration organisations found an opportunity to express interests and look for new political identities, actors, fields, or simply parties in which they could transform themselves into remote partisans.

Why would various sending countries originate groups/organisations founded for diverse reasons to support the same political party, constituting the pieces of a microcosm (that is, a homeland political party)? Considering the case political party of this study, the HDP offers little to nothing to its non-resident voters in its party programme (see Table 2). Additionally, the electoral law does not make it possible for non-resident nationals to be represented discretely.[3] So, what does typify those who get involved in the HDP mobilisation and become HDP partisans abroad? The

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[3] Discrete representation involves establishing districts abroad depending on the number of registered citizens and forming separate electoral districts (e.g., France, and Italy). This way of representation protects both parties' interests by dividing expatriate groups' representation and segmenting the political interests of that community (Hutcheson & Arrighi, 2015, p. 896).

supporters neither characterise a homogeneous elite matching the rest of the society nor a clientele driven by the homeland party resources.

Table 2. Extraterritorially most voted two Turkey-based parties in Germany and their non-resident citizens relevant party programmes (between 2015 and 2018)

Party	**Number of chapters in Germany**	**Number of selected MPs with an emigration background**			**Main topics in party programmes on external voters**
		June 2015	**Nov 2015**	**June 2018**	
AKP	Since 2002, at least 15 official, many non-official.	1/258	1/317	2/290	Specific election manifesto for the external voters aimed to improve the diaspora's needs under 5 categories: (1) mother tongue, culture and education, (2) public services, (3) law and human rights, (4) finances and work life, (5) social services.
HDP	Since 2012, at least 1 official, many non-official.	4/80	3/59	1/67	No specific chapter in the election manifesto or bulletin for the external voters.

My 5.5-year empirical observations have shown that this political field – the sum of the interest of the diaspora members that either have social capital and/or grew solidarity between these marginalised groups – overlapped with the emergence of the enfranchisement of external voting. Thus, supporters of the HDP represent a microcosm marked by the various *interstices*[4] that existed in the diaspora at large and could have been already categorised according to each group's unique transnational social space.

There are many rationalist responses belonging to these supporting individuals/groups/organisations' interests, needs, expectations, worries, and challenges – what this study calls interstices. These interstices might emerge for any reason, such as a homeland or host country originating constant jostling and rubbing against various homeland political

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[4] Didier Debaise (2008, 128): "'Interstice' has two literal meanings, a temporal one and a spatial one. In its first sense, it designates empty, intermediary spaces, fissures inside a body, all those in-between zones that contrast with the apparently 'full' body parts. It is this spatial idea of the interstice that Whitehead takes up in his definition of life: 'The conclusion to be drawn from this argument is that life is a characteristic of "empty space" and not of space "occupied" by any corpuscular society.'"

components, a decades-long atmosphere of tension and crisis, or a homeland political situation that shows no balance. Yet, as many interstices as there might be, some were observed more often than others. And, more interestingly, the common types of interstices were seen clustered among members of the same ethnic, belief, and union constellations/groups that belong to a similar transnational social space. To clarify, for this study, the various persons from Turkey and their descendants showed similar interests to their other group members who shared their transnational social space and have become HDP supporters/voters. This allows us to categorise these persons under the associations that they are actively involved in.

I argue that these mostly independent and different ethnic/belief/political associations have other interstices that led them to generate a *microcosm*, which needed a specific point in time to come into being. I suggest that in the political realm, there was a need among these groups that was already open for political action/participation – in this case, a newly born political party that would activate these groups as components of a microcosm, forming a multi-diaspora community coalition or alliance.

Germany and France are the two largest countries of residence for citizens from Turkey. By being the primary nations to which Turkish nationals wished to migrate, even after the early 1960s when the vast number of migrants came into these countries started due to economic as well as political reasons. Germany and France have, to this day, become home for various diasporic groups originating from Turkey in each migration period. These countries offered democratically freer circumstances that allowed the elevation of a new political party, the HDP, by various refugee-origin diasporic communities when the right to vote was extended to out-of-country citizens.

As briefly mentioned, the HDP, in the aftermath of its foundation in 2011, gave birth to a highly complex political partisan landscape in Germany and France. Various migrant organisations/associations and individuals took part. Yet the party supporters did not necessarily show solidarity or interaction with each other, which complicates the 'support' for the pro-Kurdish HDP from abroad. To illustrate, this support did not come only from the Kurdish organisations that were veritable supporters to any Kurdish political actor that emerged in the Turkish political scene; Alevi organisations also offered support to the party for the general elections. There was a famous Alevi candidate who was going to openly represented them in the

parliament. Furthermore, the support also came from the remote sympathisers of the Republican People's Party (Turkish: *Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi*, CHP), who mostly wish the HDP to pass the threshold to overthrow AKP's one-party rule in the Turkish parliament. In fact, these organisations and many others instead acted independently and, as expected, primarily built various motivations not limited to those previously mentioned, which led them to vocalise their support for the HDP throughout the Turkish general elections. That is why it would not be wrong to claim that all such organisations represented the pieces of a microcosm in the diaspora.

3. Structure of the thesis

The thesis has an introductory chapter, three subsequent chapters, and a concluding chapter.

This introductory chapter outlines a literature review of the theoretical debates on transnationalism, diasporas' mobilisation, and external voting, and the conceptual framework of the thesis will concern political participation in diasporas in relation to external voting by also pointing to the gaps in the literature. I will then present the research questions and attempt to address those gaps in this research.

In the following section in this introductory chapter, I will outline the methods used in this thesis, which will include the ethics, my positionality, and data analysis. The limitations of this thesis will follow the methodology section.

In Chapter I, I will analyse political parties, elections, and representation from the late Ottoman Empire to contemporary Turkey. In this chapter, I will also contextualise external voting in Turkey by providing a background on the topic. Due to a lack of literature on this subject, I use my own scoping exercises to build my case on the external voting experience of Turkey.

In Chapter II, I will initially focus on the political mobilisation of Turkey's diasporas in the two country cases of Germany and France. Following that, I will provide a background on the outreach of Turkey's political parties to these countries from early accounts to the present. Following on from this contextual foundation, along with the analytical frameworks I built in the introductory chapter and my empirical data, I will unpack the pro-HDP diasporas' organisations in Germany and France.

In Chapter III, I will continue presenting my empirical data, again using the analytical frameworks of the introductory chapter, which analyses the motivations of pro-HDP individuals in Germany and France.

These three chapters culminate in answering the main research question and sub-questions, and the overall findings are discussed in relation to the broader literature in a discussion in the concluding chapter titled "Discussion and Conclusions". The last section of the concluding chapter, "Research answers and wider contributions", demonstrates how the findings make broader contributions to the external voting literature, particularly in respect to diasporas' political mobilisation, the impact of voting eligibility, and organisational and individual incentives to become a remote supporter.

4. Literature review: conceptual and theoretical framework

Diaspora mobilisation in order to influence the home country directly or indirectly is not a new phenomenon. As far back as migration history goes, it has been known and taken the attention of various disciplines of academia, and it has been widely studied since then. Even though this dissertation primarily focuses on the diaspora's political mobilisation in relation to external voting through political transnationalisation, it would be impossible to build an understanding without explaining how these concepts evolved and perceptions and the contemporary attribution that is made through these concepts.

Early accounts of migration history show that even a century ago, migrants sustained their ties despite the absence of technological advancements in transportation and communication (Morawska, 2001; Waldinger & Fitzgerald, 2004). Nevertheless, the impact of these advancements on migrant groups, particularly the birth of electronic communication devices in the last couple of decades, has created a remarkable impact on transborder engagement (Lafleur, 2013). This situation has not only facilitated wider, more intensive, and increasingly institutionalised forms of engagement between the diaspora and homelands, but also facilitated interaction between the diasporic groups that settled in different host countries. As has been said, technological innovations should not be seen as an "epochal break" (Brubaker, 2005, p. 10). Even in the absence of these advancements, migrants have sustained their links with their

homeland, yet the factors facilitating their communication among each other are highly immense to disregard (Parla, 2006). Out-of-country voting constitutes a suitable example of how technological innovations in communication have functioned as catalysers to break the natural progress of the diasporas' mobilisation pattern in their destination countries.

Studies on transnationalisation and migration often show similarities in the migrant organisations' evolution in residence countries (Faist, 1998). Nevertheless, several determinants make each migrant group and their organisations unique. Two of the primary factors that have received scholarly attention are, first, the type of migration wave that each sending country causes and how the receiving country perceives these waves, and second, the impact of previously generated migrations and the networks that they created, which grow with the continuing migrant intake from the same country of origin.

Besides these two factors, which determine forms of establishing an organisation and generate networks in transnational social spaces, other determinants interrupt the gradual evolution of the organisational structure of the migrant settings in the host countries, altering or regenerating these settings in a relatively short amount of time. External voting is one of those critical determinants. A sending country's provision of law that enables non-resident citizens to vote for their homeland from their country of residence, external voting, can interrupt the evolution of the transnational social spaces in diaspora mobilisation patterns and bring new dimensions into it. In these spaces, the diasporic communities reshape or create a political space for themselves. This space does not necessarily emerge as self-induced which is what this thesis investigates; it could also be formed by external factors, including the country of origin and the diaspora communities in other residence countries.

This dissertation discusses how and why diasporas' political mobilisation emerges and evolves in relation to external voting. In order to unpack this phenomenon, there is a need for conceptual clarification within the transnationalisation framework (Barry, 2006; Bauböck, 2007; Lafleur, 2013; Lafleur & Martiniello, 2009; Lopez-Guerra, 2005; Margheritis, 2017; Rubio-Marin, 2006; Spiro, 2006). Therefore, this section will lay out the conceptual basis of this research with the help of the studies on transnational social spaces and political transnationalisation, and then focus on diasporas' political mobilisation, external voting, and remote partisanship.

4.1. Transnationalism

Although the first mentions of transnationalism in relation to migration studies go as early as the 1910s (Bourne, 1918), definitions of 'migrant transnationalism' have increased exponentially in the literature from the late 1990s to this day (Guarnizo & Smith, 1998; Kivisto, 2001; Levitt, 2001; Portes, 2001, 2003; Portes et al., 1999; Vertovec, 2001, 2009). The earlier mentions, despite making the phenomenon a little less complicated, still left it hard to grasp by approaching it from various angles, including transnational processes that are anchored in and span two or more nation-states, involving actors from the spheres of both state and civil society. To this day, there are still methodological challenges that the concept of migrant transnationalism is going through, despite the developments. One of the earlier approaches to transnationalism is 'methodological nationalism' (see Wimmer & Glick Schiller, 2002), which is still debated to eliminate its effects in much scholarship, though studies still lean towards it. However, this tendency limits the view of international migration through discrete nation-state societies (Glick Schiller et al., 2006; Wimmer & Glick Schiller, 2002). Mari Toivanen (2016), in her study exploring the second-generation Kurds of Finland, to avoid the trap of methodological transnationalism, approaches "the political transnational activism issue as a matter of belonging", which she explains with three themes, "diasporic consciousness, cultural preservation/continuation and boundaries" (2016, pp. 91, 103), which suits the purpose of the research most accurately.

Another challenge, raised by Vertovec (2009, p. 20), is finding the most suitable unit of analysis for studying migrant transnationalism.

> The field has seen a confusing mix of research focusing on groups based on criteria of nation-state ('Mexicans', 'Turks', etc.), region ('Oaxacans', etc.), ethnic group ('Kurds', etc.), village or locality and family. Each criterion has a different story to tell, of course, but – as in any social scientific study – we have to be aware of certain kinds of 'methodological ethnicism' which assumes ethnic groups as natural units. (Vertovec, 2009, pp. 20–21)

Although one of the most typical understandings of transnationalism can be grasped through the recognition that "migration is not simply a transfer from one place to another with few social and

material links" (Faist, 1998, p. 215), the transnational perspective has been adopted by a wide range of disciplines, covering research areas such as ethnic identity (Tölölyan, 1991), religion (Levitt, 2003), health (Lafleur & Yener-Roderburg, 2022; Villa-Torres et al., 2017), citizenship (Fox, 2005), and family (Goulbourne et al., 2010). Each discipline has attributed different meanings, leaving the phenomenon as variegated and leading multiple theories to flourish out of it. Studies on the sociology of migration as early as the 1920s recognised that migrants maintain contact with their family or relatives in their country of origins, yet it has been no more than three decades since scholars started identifying it in the course of 'the transnational turn', which can be summed up as the way migrants keep looking back at their place of origin (Vertovec, 2009, p. 13), as discussed above.

Migration is usually a combination of continual exchanges between geographically distant communities, migratory field circulation, territorial continuity, and "*contiguity* of locations"[5] (Ma Mung, 2004, p. 215). In other words, migrants, as soon as they step out of their country of origin, do not cut their ties with the sending country automatically (Faist, 1998, p. 215). On the contrary, they often sustain the links that are "a combination of geographic origin and genealogy", and among migrants who are non-state actors, these links vary from business partnerships to sharing common interests such as religion, common geographical origin, and so on; these links become "a *contiguity* of locations that give position and origin to these contemporaries" (Ma Mung, 2004, p. 215). This thesis, in this respect, adopts Vertovec's (2009) definition of transnationalism, in which "[t]he collective attributes of such connections, their processes of formation and maintenance, and their wider implications are referred to broadly as 'transnationalism'" (p. 3), which takes migrants and their descendants as actors in their own right (Faist, 2004, p. 341). As Portes (2003) underlines, "it has been recognized from the start that transnational activities are quite heterogeneous and vary across immigrant communities, both in their popularity and in their character" (p. 879). However, so as to serve the purpose of this research, immense transnational social formations (Portes et al., 2007), this research will be limited to the transnationalism of migrants and their descendants within the political realm.

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[5] Emmanuel Ma Mung (2004) indicates that in the context of diasporas, the issue of origin cannot be understood only with the "linearity or temporal *continuity*" which "links contemporaries to a mythical homeland"; rather, it "becomes a *contiguity* of locations that give position and origin to these contemporaries – like a topographical entity composed of different nodes of the diaspora, an extraterritorial monad where one's 'ancestors' are ubiquitous" (p. 215).

There have been considerable ways in which to locate migrant transnationalism at its nexus. Finding/creating a plausible typology with which to categorise transnational migrants, as well as the degrees of mobility relating to transnational practice and orientation, is becoming a problematic task, especially because of transnationalism's lack of conceptual clarity (Lafleur, 2013, p. 3). Since the last couple of decades, a vast amount of scholarship has paid attention to the perspective of transnational social networks in relation to migration studies (see, among others, Durand et al., 1999; Grasmuck & Pessar, 1991; Kearney, 1986; Portes, 1998; Vertovec & Cohen, 1999). As previously mentioned, migration is a highly complex process, so it is hard to create suitable typologies and categorisations that would meet every empiric case's need. Charles Tilly (1990) writes that "networks migrate; categories stay put; and networks create new categories" and adds that "the effective units of migration were (and are) neither individuals nor households but sets of people linked by an acquaintance, kinship, and work experience" (p. 84) who could be diaspora members and not necessarily immigrants. Therefore, since the networks, *organisations*, "provide the channels for the migration process itself" (Vertovec, 2009, p. 38), investigating the diaspora organisations in depth is necessary, rather than surprising, as the unit of analysis for this thesis.

As stated earlier, via the networks, and accordingly as they most likely become structures, because "once begun, migration flows often become self-sustaining, reflecting the establishment of networks of information, assistance and obligations which develop between migrants in the host society and friends and relatives in the sending area" (Boyd, 1989, p. 641). This study's field consists of a mix of groups based on criteria of nation-states (Turkish people), ethnic groups (e.g., Turks, Kurds and Yezidis), religious groups (e.g., Sunnis and Alevis), region (going as local as the villages where the migrants come from), and political orientation (e.g., leftist, liberal and Marxist).[6] Each criterion appears as an individual's identities and demonstrates the extent of the hardships of studying migrant mobilisation through small-scale groupings. Therefore, migrant organisations appear as the most suitable analysis for the purpose of this research. "Organizations are frequently significant actors within movements [mobilisation] and can give them a temporal continuity that exceeds the commitment of individual actors" (Sökefeld, 2006,

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[6] These categories do not necessarily align with their parallels in Western societies. For example, an HDP elector may see him/herself as leftist and may be seen as such, but in several aspects, he/she may be on the right or far right on the European scale.

p. 269). In addition to this, investigating diaspora organisations offers a unique opportunity to look into the rapid changes in the formation of networks and transnational social spaces and the motivations of the diaspora during a game-changing event (e.g., external voting), whether originating from the home country, the host country, or both. Furthermore, Faist (2004, p. 342) proves the appropriateness of this unit of analysis by giving an example of long-lasting migrant associations, established a century ago by ethnic migrants in the United States, that are still active and benefitting the same ethnic group today.

The two concepts of *transnational social fields*[7] and *transnational social spaces* are used interchangeably in transnational literature, and as a common mistake in scholarly research, 'diaspora' is also added to this category. However, the first two refer to the complex of connections and practices across borders that "arise in the wake of international migration or refugee flows as a consequence of … leaving one country and entering another or moving on to a third country" (Faist, 2004, p. 340). "[M]igrants often return to their country of origin for shorter or longer periods" (Faist, 2004, p. 340) or do not return at all but presume the relationship in one way or another (e.g., fourth and fifth generations' support for the countries of their ancestors). *Diaspora* - as will be analysed in the following sections -, on the other hand, refers to the individuals who are the subjects of these complex cross-border networks. Diaspora members do not have to be the only subjects of these networks; however, given their transnational nature, they are likely to be dominant in transnational social spaces.

To be able to characterise the type of migrant transnationalism that this research deals with, this study is based on the concept of transnational social space, and its differentiation from the other commonly used concepts, particularly that of diaspora. Earlier studies on this phenomenon have explained transnational social spaces as the "combinations of social and symbolic ties, positions in networks and organizations, and networks of organizations that can be found in at least two geographically and internationally distinct places" (Faist, 1998, p. 216).

Here the need for clarification emerges as to what "social and symbolic ties [and] positions" actually are. These are embodied as networks and organisations. A phenomenon that is very

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[7] In this study, I accept Swartz's interpretation of Bourdieu's "*fields*" that denote "arenas of production, circulation, and appropriation and exchange of goods, services, knowledge, or status, and the competitive positions held by actors in their struggle to accumulate, exchange, and monopolize different kinds of power resources (capitals)" (Swartz, 1981, p. 332).

much the cause of why these social networks exist, as Faist (1998) describes with fields/spaces, takes inspiration from Pierre Bourdieu's (1980) 'social capital'. Locating social capital in the transnational realm is critical before moving to Faist's transnational social spaces approach. Portes (1995), drawing primarily on Bourdieu (1980) and James Coleman (1988), describes social capital as the "capacity of individuals to command scarce resources by virtue of their membership in networks or broader social structures" (Portes, 1994, p. 14). Social capital can be, and is, maintained via creating contacts such as communication via phone, computer, or social media; marriage; participation in events; or membership in an association. *Networks* and subsequently *migrant organisations* are such circumstances in which social capital is activated and can be applied to the transnational realm; this is where Faist (1998) grasps transnational social spaces.

Faist (1998) puts forward a more expansive, beyond-borders approach to social space. This is available to immigrants and refugees in their countries in addition to assimilation and ethnic pluralism (Bonacich, 1979) by acknowledging that "transnational social spaces enlarge the range of possibilities" (Faist, 1998, pp. 214–215). In other words, transnational social spaces do not only evolve but also can be pursued in different dimensions, not necessarily within the borders of immigrant adaptation but potentially also going back to its origins.

Keeping the significance of networks for migration in mind, the first question may appear as to how transnational spaces emerge and whether social space as a concept is open to be stretched to a further or another meaning if a historical incident would interfere with the course of events. Faist (1998, 2004) explains that there are two chronological phases of transnational spaces. The first phase, as expected, sees the emergence of transnational social spaces as by-products of international migration, basically limited to first-generation migrants in relation to their country of origin and destination as they form new communities that are "from a structural perspective as a network of networks and organizations" (Faist, 2004, p. 347). The second phase starts when "transnational social spaces go beyond the strictly migratory chains of the first generation of migrants and develop a life of their own" (2004, p. 348). Faist (2004) adds that "this phase is characterized by potential political involvement in both emigration and immigration countries" (p. 348). This second point shows parallelism with Tilly's (1990) statement on migrant networks: "networks create new categories" (p. 84).

In order to contribute to debates around relationalities within political transnationalisation through diaspora organisations, an analysis on the role of the emergence of external voting which will be detailed in the following section will be assessed against three "transnational social spaces" brought by Faist (1998, p. 220). This approach attempts to differentiate the "formation of transnational social spaces, ranging from rather short-lived exchange relationships to long-lived transitional communities" (Faist, 1998, p. 218) by acknowledging that there might be many more social spaces: 1. Kinship- and community-based transnational exchange, reciprocity, and solidarity; 2. Transnational circuits; and 3. Transnational communities (p. 218).

While the typologies, categorisations, and degrees of mobility in the transnational realm are still in flux, the concept is relatively loose when it comes to its usage. Political transnationalism started taking its place in studies in the early 2000s, and by and large, scholars agree on the definition of the concept, which focuses on the diaspora members' political connections and practices in relation to their country of origin (Bauböck, 2003; Faist, 2004; Østergaard-Nielsen, 2001). These connections and methods include taking part in external voting, being a remote partisan for a homeland political party, protesting, lobbying, and participating in overseas rallies of the homeland political parties. The practices of these activities make the subject of the action a transnational political activist, and these activists are becoming the only actors of these actions. However, as detailed below, there are also cases showing that sending-country political bodies such as parties sometimes make the connection by establishing either party branches or satellite migrant organisations to serve their purposes (Faist & Özveren, 2004; Yener-Roderburg, 2020).

4.1.1. Concluding remarks on transnationalism

In light of the points mentioned above, I now offer three arguments, rather clarifications, that would also frame my approach on transnational social spaces and political transnationalisation for the thesis: (1) Faist's (1998) two phases of transnational social spaces should be complemented by two other interventions to fill more gaps in the description. First, the two phases imply that the distinction between them is clear, which is contradictory. Migration flows are characterised mainly by migration networks that blossom in transnational social spaces among the diasporas, not only among migrants. In other words, as long as the migration flow from the same country of origin to the same country of destination continues, the first generation of migrants will keep coming, and (a) these new groups of people will revive the first phase, and

therefore the second phase will not be possible for every space, (b) these new groups may directly surpass the first phase and be part of the second phase through previously made connections (migration networks), or (c) both. Monica Boyd (1989) states that "networks [here *network* can be understood as the source of the transnational space] connect migrants across time and space. … These networks link populations in origin and receiving countries and ensure that movements are not necessarily limited in time, unidirectional or permanent" (p. 641). Therefore, the embeddedness of the phases could be highly significant indicators that help us understand that evolving social places are hard to separate between the phases. And this claim is particularly valid when there is a continuous flow of migration towards the host country due to any reason including chain migration, family reunification, marriages, etc.).

(2) Faist's two phases acknowledge that transnational social spaces are not static but dynamic (1998, 2004); however, on that point, an exciting ambivalence in his oft-cited scholarly work draws attention: (a) Why do second or even third generations inherit the social spaces of their ancestors in moving to the second phase, or (b) why do these generations travel in between the phases, which blurs the line between the two? Here it is clear that, for such an indistinct nuance between the phases to come into being, there has to be a historical momentum that would clash with an external interruption. It is hard for such a rare occasion to come into existence with only a few parameters. Therefore, it would originate from the dynamics of either a host country, a home country, or both. Due to lack of academic acknowledgement on the blurred line between the phases, in this thesis, I ask "how" and "why" questions in order to identify some of the key characteristics that may give rise to such a change in the traditional understanding of transnational social space and stress the significance of the flexible borders of the phases.

(3) Studies of political transnationalisation have been primarily concerned with the product of the migrants and refugees who are in the political profile of the network or part of a sending country's diaspora politics (Østergaard-Nielsen, 2016), as well as issues of membership in more than one nation (Bauböck, 2003; Finn, 2020; Jakobson et al., 2021; Peltoniemi, 2018; Umpierrez de Reguero et al., 2020). Faist (2004) acknowledges the possibility of both emigrant and immigration countries' political involvement in immigrants' and their descendants' spaces but ignores the subject's capacity for politicisation (2004, p. 347). As diasporic groups become more rooted in their residence countries, it is to be expected that the transnational social spaces of each

community develops, changes, or merges with other networks, which is, as this study underlines, likely to lead to the politicisation of various organisations which were not initially known as political. This situation can also be read as the diasporic groups construct 'home away from home' (Anderson, 1992; Brinkerhoff, 2009, 2012; Demmers, 2002; Fair, 2005; Hall & Kostić, 2009). Furthermore, different class groups use different networks for various purposes, setting their social spaces apart. Therefore, these groups would not be expected to act together (see Salaff et al., 1999). These kinds of approaches are prevalent in transnational migration studies, yet while they explain varieties of relational and structural embeddedness in migrants' networks, they are far from explaining how some sudden marginal changes can generate a critical momentum among the various diaspora communities, and how these communities' networks intermingle for the same cause, despite belonging to different transnational social spaces, and create a microcosm (e.g., a political party).

4.2. Diasporas and diasporas' mobilisation

4.2.1. Diaspora

Since the late 1980s, there has been a great interest in diaspora studies. As the term 'diaspora' takes more attention in various disciplines, the number of meanings attributed to it to "accommodate the various intellectual, cultural and political agendas in the service of which it has been enlisted" (Brubaker, 2005, p. 1) has increased remarkably. This dissertation does not aim to contribute to the debate on the meaning of 'diaspora' or what it should claim to be. It instead focuses more on what construes a 'diaspora' and what that means in this context; therefore, framing the limits of 'diaspora' is necessary for this study.

From the early accounts until the turn of the millennium, it has been observed that the definitions of diaspora were making connections to the classic diasporas: the Jewish, Greek, and Armenian ones (Sheffer, 2003, p. 9). However, William Safran's (1991) definition of diaspora members has become one of the ground-breaking approaches in diaspora studies that extended the concept's reach to grasp a greater community:

> 1) [T]hey, or their ancestors, have been dispersed from a specific original
> 'center' to two or more 'peripheral', or foreign, regions; 2) they retain a

collective memory, vision, or myth about their original homeland – its physical location, history, and achievements; 3) they believe that they are not – and perhaps cannot be – fully accepted by their host society and therefore feel partly alienated and insulated from it; 4) they regard their ancestral homeland as their true, ideal home and as the place to which they or their descendants would (or should) eventually return – when conditions are appropriate; 5) they believe that they should, collectively, be committed to the maintenance or restoration of their original homeland and to its safety and prosperity; and 6) they continue to relate, personally or vicariously, to that homeland in one way or another, and their ethnocommunal consciousness and solidarity are importantly defined by the existence of such a relationship. (Safran, 1991, pp. 83–84)

Clifford (1994) supports the view of Safran (1991) on this point and also underlines the need for an extended diaspora definition adds that "we should be able to recognize the strong entailment of Jewish history on the language of diaspora without making that history a definite model. Jewish (and Greek and Armenian) diasporas can be taken as non-normative starting points for a discourse that is travelling or hybridizing in new global conditions" (Clifford, 1994, p. 306).

What Clifford suggested has become reliable in time, and more and more studies have adopted the diaspora concept to their unique contexts. Nevertheless, this situation brought about a number of diasporas grasping every group member, to the point that the concept itself has become useless (Brubaker, 2005, p. 3).

Stretching the meaning of the concept of diaspora originates from diasporic identities that have been perceived from various perspectives, which changes our understanding of these diasporic identities depending on where we look. It is also hard to make a clear distinction on views because their intangibility also makes them overlap. It would be reasonable to illustrate some of the approaches here. Walker Connor (1986) defines diaspora from the sending country perspective as the "segment of a people living outside the homeland" (p. 16); in other words, a person who leaves the home nation's borders to settle in another nation's territory, whether they are assimilated or not, constitutes diaspora. Gabaccia's (2000) work on the Italian diaspora in the United States is an excellent example of that perspective. There is also the 'host country and

third parties' definition of diaspora, which categorises new residents of the destination countries with these people's putative constituency and the reason behind the diasporic experience, such as the Sri Lankan diaspora and labour diasporas. In Cohen's ([1997] 2008) 'victim diaspora', on the model of the Jewish case, the diaspora members themselves essentialise their belonging, sometimes without any emotional/identifying link to their putative homelands; some very known examples are the Kurdish diaspora and the Tamil diaspora.

Yet as Cohen ([1997] 2008) filtered the extensive work that has been devoted to diasporas, he showed in his book that four major tools can help us determine where to draw the line regarding whether to acknowledge a community under a "diasporic umbrella" ([1997] 2008, p. 5):

> 1 We can distinguish between emic and etic claims (the participants' view versus the observers' view) and discuss how these claims map onto the history and social structure of the group concerned.

> 2 We can add a time dimension looking at how a putative social formation, in the case of a diaspora, comes into being, how it develops in various countries of settlement and how it changes in response to subsequent events in hostlands and homelands.

> 3 We can list the most important features that seem to apply (or partly apply) to some, most or all of the cases we consider are part of the phenomenon we are investigating.

> 4 Finally, we can create a typology, classifying phenomena and their subtypes using the measures of consistency, objectivity, pattern recognition and dimensionality with a view to evolving an agreed and controlled vocabulary. In social science, Weber's 'ideal types' … is a widely used method, which I also adopt. (Cohen, [1997] 2008, p. 5)

To serve the purpose of this study, my limitations on the diaspora concept come from three approaches that are relatively open yet not distinct enough to avoid falling into the trap of stretching the meaning to the point in which no single person is left out (Sartori, 1970), as well as keeping in mind Kim Butler's (2001) reminder that over-defining diaspora is a threat to generating a consensus on its definition (p. 190). I, first, follow the conceptually most applicable

definition and frame of diaspora, which observes diaspora from within part of the community – in other words, grasping diaspora from the members' perspective in what Cohen ([1997] 2008) calls "participants' view" rather than "observers' view" (p. 5).

Secondly, in this thesis, I add a temporal dimension to reflect how the continuous arrival of the first generation of emigrants[8] as well as circular migration give rise to changes in the early formation of diaspora in host countries and how the early arrivees respond to this inflow (Cohen, [1997] 2008, p. 5); furthermore, the complexity between the diasporas' organisations increases, which lasts for generations (Poros, 2011). Furthermore, circular migration, another concept that has recently become fashionable in migration studies, is very much relevant for the case countries in relation to Turkey-originating migrants. As underlined in the Global Commission on International Migration in 2005, permanent migrant settlement gradually gives way to circular migration. That is to say, circular migration is the new version of the guest programme (GCIM/UM, 2005). The definition of circular migration is not easy to determine, but the common understanding of the term is "the temporal rhythm or punctuation, often associated with a spatial separation of different spheres of life" (Carling et al., 2021, p. 3; see also Lulle, 2020). Situating the concept for this study would be better understood with the further explanation of Castles and Özkul (2014) that circular migration is a situation in which migrants are able to move between an origin country and one or more destination countries repeatedly, for stays of varying duration that can also be seen as the new version of the guest worker programme. This definition suggests that the long-term integration of the migrant is not required in the case of circular migration.

Moreover, countries of origin can fully benefit from the migrants' skills upon their return, although critics of circular migration claim that expected advantages to origin countries as well as to the migrants themselves are often not tangible. Wickramasekara (2011) argues that circular migration benefits the destination country, contrary to the origin countries' belief, since it lets

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[8] Akgönül (2016) points out that the generation concept in migration studies is often used to draw limits or conclusions; however, in the case of his study, which focuses on the generation concept among people originating from Turkey in France people of Turkish origin generate the 'perpetual first generation' strategy through "the marriage of young French people of Turkish descent to Turkish brides and grooms who preferably live in Turkey, and even more preferably are brought to France for marriage from the region of the French family's hometown" (2016, p. 408). The 'perpetual first generation' strategy not only keeps the bonds between these populations tight with Turkey (Akgönül, 2016), but also invalidates the importance of generational differentiation for migration studies.

migrants bring in labour and social and cultural changes. This approach overlaps with past guest worker policies that consider migrants as exploitable labour force rather than social beings.

By doing this, this study requires that we do not disregard the various reasons that cause the migration in the first place and form different diasporas throughout the continued (and continuing) migration flows from the sending country to the destinations. Therefore, I include Tölölyan's (1991) semantic approach in my definition of diaspora. Tölölyan (1991) mentions "a larger semantic domain that includes words like immigrant, expatriate, refugee, guest-worker, exile community, overseas community, ethnic community" (1991, p. 4). Rightfully acknowledging the suitability of the mentioned diaspora definitions by Cohen ([1997] 2008) and Tölölyan (1991), I hereby reject the approach of separating migrant and diaspora communities as long as they are not dormant, unlike Faist's (2004) separation. I prefer to use 'diasporas' instead of 'diaspora' because, in this thesis, I argue that each diaspora has its own stance (Brubaker, 2005, p. 12) and should be given specified attention when they need to be mentioned separately under their own 'diasporic umbrella' and as a single diaspora.

Thirdly, and most critically, in this thesis, diasporas will be defined from the participants' perspective, as stated above. However, this still is not enough to draw the limits of the diaspora approach of this study. Therefore, a more elaborate line should be pursued when taking the participants' point of view. I claim that the diaspora members' perspective autochthonously limits the diaspora concept to the non-dormant members, what Sheffer (2003) calls "core" and "marginal" ones (p. 100). Sheffer (2003, p. 100) and Brubaker (2005, p. 11) argue that the notion of 'dormant members' of a diaspora is complicated, because if these members are completely integrated or assimilated into a host country and have no knowledge or demand to bond to any diasporic group, there is barely any point in counting them as part of the diaspora. Brubaker, to this point, offers a diaspora definition that rejects seeing "'a diaspora' or 'the diaspora' as an entity, a bounded group, an ethno-demographic or ethnocultural fact", and points out that "it may be more fruitful, and certainly more precise to speak of diasporic stances, projects, claims, idioms, practices, and so on" (Brubaker, 2005, pp. 12–13). Furthermore, accepting 'the diaspora' as an entity would also generate a misperception of self-identified diaspora members and put them in the same category as the committed diaspora in the eyes of the observers, which would also increase the likelihood of misinterpretation of the migrant population as a whole.

The point mentioned above should not be taken to mean that diaspora members are static. As can be deducted from the above approach, I argue that quantifying the diaspora members would not bring us the actual number of diaspora members who are not dormant. As Sheffer (2003) and Brubaker (2005) underline, and as this thesis very much benefits from, there is always a possibility of change in dormant or inactive diaspora members: they may awaken (Brubaker, 2005, pp. 13, 15; Sheffer, 2003, p. 21), and accordingly they may acquire a 'diasporic stance'; they may drop their diasporic stance; and there might be critical moments triggered by the home country, the host country, or both, that would assign 'diasporic stance' to dormant members or to the claimed members without the 'stance'. Even though this change occurring in the stance of the diaspora members could be momentaneous, or the same members or other ones may "distance themselves from such a stance in other times and context" (Brubaker, 2005, p. 15), it still would not be possible to quantify the diaspora. Therefore, in this thesis, population-related data on diasporic groups, when given if it is not obtainable (i.e., for the Kurdish and Alevi populations), will not aim to take account of Sheffer's (2003) distinctions between diaspora members but instead will be mentioned to be "maximally inclusive" (Brubaker, 2005, p. 11).

4.2.2. Diasporas' mobilisation

Diaspora mobilisation is very much connected to the definition of diaspora that this study acknowledges, which is necessary to recall diaspora "as a category of practice, project, claim and stance" (Brubaker, 2005, p. 13). Nevertheless, this definition brings about a question: that is, how can diaspora be seen in the way Brubaker claims? The answer is already inherent in the definition. Because this thesis acknowledges the non-dormant members of the diaspora as the ones constituting the diaspora, we cannot talk about a diaspora with inactive members only. As Sökefeld (2006) states, there must be a unifying of "segments of people that live in territorially separated locations" (p. 267). In other words, "migrants do not necessarily form a diaspora but they may *become* a diaspora by developing a new imagination of community" (Sökefeld, 2006, p. 267, italics original). This approach is not necessarily very different from what Sheffer (2003) says about not counting the non-dormant members as the building blocks of the diaspora. Yet this leads us to the point where we can see that the non-mobilised diaspora is not a 'diaspora'. Mobilised diasporas are "*imagined transnational communities*" (Sökefeld, 2006, p. 267, italics original). Via this understanding of diaspora, I would once more like to underline that this thesis

does not take diaspora as 'an entity' or 'a bounded group' but as "a category of practice, project, claim and stance" (Brubaker, 2005, p. 13), which consists of members with mutual standpoint(s) (Sökefeld, 2006, p. 267).

When we get to our original question that directly engages one of this study's research questions, Sheffer asks "why and how diasporas organized" (2003, p. 26), or as Sökefeld (2006) would have asked, why migrants become diasporas. Acknowledging the fact that not all migrants adhere to communities or "imagine themselves as transnational" leads to "a fundamental error to allow the use of diaspora as a synonym for all migrants" (Cohen, [1997] 2008, p. 13). Sökefeld (2006) here brings about a significant literary contribution on *mobilising in transnational space* (which I use interchangeably with 'diaspora mobilisation'), of which he states, "diaspora is not simply a 'given' of migrants' existence that is in itself permanent but has to be effected time and again by agents who employ a variety of mobilising practices, though discourses that accompany such practices generally construct diaspora communities in essentialist terms (p. 277). By doing this, Sökefeld (2006) does not directly utilise the social movement theories yet adopts certain features to diaspora mobilisation by summing up the need for diasporas to mobilise under three categories: (1) *political opportunities*, (2) *mobilising structures and practices*, and (3) *framing*. First, *political opportunities* in social movements "refer to the [necessary] structural, including institutional, conditions that enable [their] rise" (Sökefeld, 2006, p. 269), which in the diaspora context would mean "communication, media and transport, as well as the legal and institutional (for example multiculturalist) frameworks within which claims for community and identity can be articulated" in several national and transnational fields (Sökefeld, 2006, p. 270).

Mobilising structures and practices is the second necessary condition for diaspora formation, as imagined transnational communities are "collective vehicles, informal as well as formal, through which people mobilize and engage in collective action" (McAdam et al., 1996, p. 3). Sökefeld (2006) adds that "mobilizing structures can be networks of people that are bound to the same issue or formal organizations that are established for the purpose of making particular claims" (p. 269). These networks and associations can vary in their reason for formation; "they may be situated at the local level (such as neighbourhood community associations), but they also include high-level associations that are themselves of a transnational character. Kinship ties can also be important (transnational) mobilizing structures" (Sökefeld, 2006, p. 270).

Third, *framing* as the third category in the diaspora context is meant to "establish not only the significance of the imagined community but may also refer to specific events that are then defined as incidents that affect the whole community and that thereby trigger, as we shall see, the formation of a diaspora community" (Sökefeld, 2006, p. 271); yet in social movements, "[f]rames are specific ideas that fashion a shared understanding for a social movement by rendering events and conditions meaningful and enable a common framework of interpretation and representation" (Sökefeld, 2006, p. 269).

4.2.3. Concluding remarks on diasporas and diasporas' mobilisation

As this thesis sees diaspora as an existing entity only when it is mobilised (Brubaker, 2005; Sheffer, 2003; Sökefeld, 2006), diaspora mobilisation or "imagined transnational community" (Sökefeld, 2006, p. 267) can be viewed as the outcome of Sökefeld's (2006) categories of diaspora mobilisation (political opportunities, mobilising structures and practices, and framing), which he adjusted from social movement theories. However, a more inclusive approach is necessary to expand the concept of *framing* in the diaspora context, which does not show parallelism with social movement theory. Thus, this thesis requires a wider category to grasp the formation of the different diasporas' communities as a result of certain extraordinary political moments that would lead them in the same direction and create a microcosm – not necessarily to generate it as allies, but to be parts of the commitment. Therefore, despite acknowledging that diaspora mobilisation exists, I recognise that diasporas' mobilisation for the same cause independent of each other is a phenomenon that also exists and has yet to get the attention it deserves.

4.3. External voting

4.3.1. External voting

Over the past two decades, there has been an exponential increase in studies that pay attention to the electoral rights of citizens living abroad (Barry, 2006; Bauböck, 2007; Kernalegenn & Van Haute, 2020; Lafleur & Martiniello, 2009; López-Guerra, 2005; Nohlen & Grotz, 2000; Rubio-Marin, 2006; Spiro, 2006; Wellman & Whitaker, 2021). Even though the legitimacy of external

voting is so far the most attractive angle for the subject (Bauböck, 2015; Beckman, 2007; Collyer & Vathi, 2007; Escobar, 2007; IDEA & IFE, 2007; Itzigsohn & Villacres, 2008; Smith, 2008), within the last decade, many significant contributions have started moving scholarly attention more towards the impact and response of emigrant voting, such as the impact of non-resident voter turnout on national politics (Burean & Popp, 2015; Gamlen, 2014b), political inclusion of the diasporic population based on granted voting rights (Palop-Garcia & Pedroza, 2017; Wellman, 2021), the sending country's institutional performance regarding electoral turnout in host countries (Adamson, 2019; Burgess, 2018, 2020; Finn & Besserer, forthcoming; Østergaard-Nielsen & Ciornei, 2019b), political parties' interest in emigrants (Camatarri, 2021; Paarlberg, 2017, 2020), political parties abroad (Kernalegenn & Van Haute, 2020; Rashkova, 2020; Umpierrez de Reguero & Dandoy, 2021). However, there still are significant theoretical as well as conceptual gaps in the external voting literature. This study, by recalibrating the meaning and understanding of external voting, aims to fill the foremost gap.

As seen above, the heightened interest in external voting has also increased the number of angles from which to approach the phenomenon, with different terms used to describe the extension of participation rights to citizens residing abroad. Some of these are remote voting, out-of-country voting, non-resident voting, emigrant voting, absentee voting, and external voting (Bauböck, 2007). Despite small nuances between these terms, they are often used interchangeably – as I also do in this thesis – and the following definition of external voting seems to be the widely accepted one by experts:

> Active and passive voting rights of qualified individuals, independently of
> their professional status, to take part from outside the national territory in
> referenda or in supranational, national, subnational, or primary elections held
> in a country of which they hold citizenship but where they permanently or
> temporarily do not reside. (Lafleur, 2013, p. 31)

As seen from this oft-quoted description akin to the earliest definitions, the most common understanding of external voting is the whole of concrete out-of-country suffrage policies of the sending countries, which is limited to eligible citizens living abroad. Even though the implementation of external voting is linked to several operational procedures and external voting

methods that practically concern only the citizens of the sending countries, being eligible to cast a vote is not in itself a sufficient reason for actually casting a vote.

It is a known phenomenon that non-resident citizens are less willing to go to the ballot box as compared to resident citizens (Itzigsohn & Villacres, 2008). This is because, although being eligible for casting a vote is a prerequisite for carrying out the voting procedure, it is not the most significant determinant for turning out to vote. Rather, interactions with electoral mobilisers are the essential variables in determining electoral participation (Bernstein & Packard, 1997). Studies by Rosenstone and Hansen (1993) and Bernstein and Packard (1997) underline the importance of social networks in generating interpersonal interactions that mobilise voters with a direct impact on political participation, by stressing 'less effort at mobilisation' as the primary cause of the decline in U.S. election turnout between the 1960s and 1980s (Rosenstone & Hansen, 1993). And, as a causal effect on voting, "[c]itizens who are contacted by political parties, exposed to intensely fought electoral campaigns, or inspired by the actions of social movements are more likely to vote, to persuade, to campaign, and to give" (Rosenstone & Hansen, 1993, pp. 209–210).

Rolfe (2012) claims that "virtually all turnout is mobilized, either directly or indirectly, by campaigns and related activity" (p. 15). Thus, in the transnational context, the absence of the homeland parties and political elites (candidates, organisations, activists, the media) would affect "the salience of the election" (Rolfe, 2012, p. 15). Freedman's (2002) work on the Chinese migrant community in the United States also evidences that "when there are electoral incentives for political elites to mobilize the [Chinese] community, then Chinese do participate in greater number than when there are weaker electoral concerns at stake" (p. 193). However, a unique situation occurs when the elections are taking place out-of-country, where the homeland political parties are by and large having similar difficulties in reaching the nationals, so the mobilisation phenomena become significantly more important. In the transnational context, implementation of external voting is linked to several operational procedures and external voting methods that are primarily impractical (e.g., requiring geographical proximity), which increases the importance of mobilising non-resident voters to participate in elections and other voting events.

Though emigrant voting is becoming a topic that is discussed more often, no in-depth study of how campaigning and voter mobilisation has evolved has been conducted, or a study investigating the emigrant associations' mobilisation capacity in different countries and contexts particularly when it is not reduced to emigrants' electoral political engagement with their sending country but also non-electoral political engagement (see Ahmadov & Sasse, 2015, 2016; Vintila & Martiniello, 2021). This study, however, as evidenced by the empirical research, indicates that the external voting policies to which non-resident eligible voters or non-eligible individuals are subjected impact the nationals abroad in two important ways: (1) Leaving the non-eligible nationals to languish without their voting rights, while giving rights to vote to the eligible citizens in the country of residence, had no capacity to stop the non-voters from becoming remote supporters or remote partisans legislation. (2) Non-resident individuals may become remote partisans in unique ways not directed by the official homeland party branches, but by their self-attained incentives, independent of their voting eligibility. These unique ways could surface when looking at individual organisational approaches in generating partisanship and voter mobilisation that could be highly decentralised yet important in parties' out-of-country mobilisation, especially considering the out-of-country electioneering difficulties of the parties. As a result, when it comes to the actors of this practice, the common limited understanding of external voting does neglect the non-voter diaspora groups in the host countries, which creates the necessity of bringing about another approach that would be more inclusive. Thus, the extended version of Lafleur's (2013) understanding of external voting will be used throughout this study. The altered version of the famous definition is as follows: *External voting is the electoral process in which* active *(right to vote)* and passive voting rights *(right to get elected)* of qualified individuals *and the individuals who lack voting rights*, independently of their professional status … take part *in the electoral process* from outside the national territory in referenda or in supranational, national, subnational, or primary elections held in a country … *independent from whether* they hold citizenship but where they permanently or temporarily do not reside (Lafleur, 2013, p. 31, italics are my additions).

A vast number of migration intake from countries with long-lasting ethnic tensions such as Turkey should be evaluated with further studies regarding remote voting that do not disregard non-voters. As expected, the different, particularly ethnic, components not only have followed different fashions throughout the migration history of Turkey but also have generated a unique

form of mobilisation by/for homeland political parties within the diaspora that is directly linked to the diasporic identity of these distinct groups and is active independent from their voting eligibility (Yener-Roderburg, 2018). Therefore, the understanding of external voting in this study is extended to grasp the diasporas' partisan groups as a whole and does not discriminate against those who lack voting rights.

Additionally, seeing external voting from this expanded perspective also opens new areas that deserve attention and new concepts to comprehend and describe. Citizenship and remote partisanship are the particular concepts that this thesis engages with, and sheds light on in the transnational context, in Chapters II and III.

4.3.2. Parties abroad

The out-of-country reach of the political parties is limited. This limitation does not only come from the geographical proximity between the sending country and the host country. Rather, the extent of the political parties' reach is also challenged concerning the type of diasporic community that resides in the host country and the host country's regulations, among other factors. But to serve the aim of this dissertation's research question, as a historic political moment, how does external voting lead diaspora organisations in favour of a homeland political party?, and sub-questions, how and why do diaspora organisations mobilise for a homeland political party during the electoral process from the countries in which they are based? How does voting eligibility impact the patterns of political engagement in the case of external voting? What incentives do diaspora organisations and individuals have to become pro-HDP alliances/partisans in Germany and France?, it is essential to draw attention to the homeland parties' reach, their actions, and their sympathisers' reactions, which necessitate revisiting the definition of a political party and redefining a homeland political party from the diasporas' perspective.

This situation comes with several further hardships. One of the main ones is the scarce literature on political parties' out-of-country reach. Recent works of Kernalegenn and Van Haute (2020, 2021)[9] and Rashkova (2020) are, to this day, two of the very few extensive works specifically on political parties abroad, which will very likely become classic reference points for future studies

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[9] I have myself contributed to this form of proliferation with a paper on 'party organizations across borders' (Yener-Roderburg, 2020).

yet are also limited in their conceptual input. One of the most studied areas of political science, party studies, has not yet fully acknowledged the subset category of parties abroad, as evidenced by the fact that that the studies on this topic are covered mainly by the political scientists who work on migration. The book by Kernalegenn and Van Haute (2020) presents that political parties abroad exist without leaving any scepticism on the matter, evidencing this by presenting at least ten empirical cases from Japan to the United States from the perspectives of area experts. Nevertheless, the rich empirical evidence the book offers does not generate a theoretical reflection on the elements that shape a political party abroad. Therefore, the significant aspects of a party such as a party organisation, partisanship, and party membership are not well-defined. The more recent works on parties and their extraterritorial outreach by Burgess (2020), Camatarri (2021), and Paarlberg (2020), Rashkova (2020) also fail to draw attention to these elements and remain on the empirical side of the topic.

Within the literature which links political transnationalism and diaspora organisations, diaspora organisations are evaluated via the transnational social spaces the migrant networks have created (i.e., in terms of their compliance with or antagonism towards the sending country or other diaspora organisations). Therefore, diaspora networks are usually considered the most plausible elements to describe the migrant communities in receiving countries (Faist, 1998). Within the external voting literature, diaspora networks either are the target of the sending country's political parties (Østergaard-Nielsen & Ciornei, 2019a, 2019b; Paarlberg, 2017) or can be grasped as a self-motivated remote alliance of a 'homeland' political party (Gherghina & Soare, 2020; Umpierrez de Reguero & Dandoy, 2020; Yener-Roderburg, 2020). To this end, it can be concluded that the existing literature has not acknowledged diaspora communities as an unavoidable part of the building blocks of the political mobilisation abroad but rather as the stooge of the homeland political parties.

Diaspora mobilisations have been analysed extensively for their engagements in the trajectories of homeland-originating political parties. Despite some attempts, however (Camatarri, 2021; Fliess, 2021; Gamlen, 2014a; Paarlberg, 2020; Umpierrez de Reguero et al., 2021), they have not been comprehensively combined with external voting. I argue that within research on political parties and external voting, there is a path-dependent perspective limited to the out-of-country reach of home country parties (Burgess, 2018; Burgess & Tyburski, 2020; Østergaard-Nielsen &

Ciornei, 2019b; Paarlberg, 2017). In most of the political party studies that focus on their remote functioning, 'diaspora organisations' are seen as the target of the homeland political parties (Fliess, 2021; Koinova & Tsourapas, 2018), dismissing the possibility that some migrants and refugees from their respective countries may be keen builders of transnational spaces of their own that are highly political. Additionally, the new scholarly debates that connect migrant associations to homeland parties recognise the migrant organisations into consideration as the unit of analysis (Fliess, 2021; Paarlberg, 2020). However, although oft-cited studies (e.g., Østergaard-Nielsen, 2003b) acknowledge the political strength of migrants, diasporas and refugees' transnational political practices as significant networks, decades after such acknowledgement, diaspora organisations are yet to be credited as the source of the political mobilisation themselves in the external voting literature, which, however rapidly growing in recent years, is still scarce.

Thus, I oppose studies on political parties abroad that often put stress on the influence of these parties on the migrant organisations. This reduced understanding of the diaspora organisations disregards the fact that organisations with an autonomous structure or independent nature, and/or with their own will, are likely to develop an interest in homeland political parties and mobilise for them. Only a handful of studies have made this distinction (Yener-Roderburg, 2020). Knowing how and why diaspora organisations are involved in or generate mobilisation for a homeland political party in the residence countries throughout the sending country's electoral period could significantly contribute to the knowledge of diaspora studies and external voting studies.

In most out-of-country voting studies, 'diaspora members' are conceptualised as expatriates, non-resident eligible voters, and expatriates, despite the eligible electorate not being the sole members of the diaspora organisations (Collyer & Vathi, 2007; Lafleur, 2011; Palop-Garcia & Pedroza, 2017; Turcu & Urbatsch, 2015). In the existing rich literature on extraterritorial voting, 'diaspora members' are not specified as part of an external voting process.

Here I argue that analyses of external voting studies often limit their focus to the interaction of the diaspora members who are eligible to vote in the homeland elections. This conceptualisation of 'diaspora members' excludes a significant number of groups who have been involved in the homeland electoral process remotely yet lack only voting rights. In other words, extending

voting rights to non-resident citizens marked a period that developed a new transnational social space in which non-voter groups were also involved. Moreover, there are patterns of interaction between the diaspora groups that are formed independent of voting eligibility, as evidenced in the rich research on political diasporas (Østergaard-Nielsen, 2016). Knowing more about how and why non-voter diaspora members are involved in external voting processes could significantly contribute to and redefine the knowledge of citizenship/external voting studies and extend the meaning and types of remote partisanship (Yener-Roderburg, 2018).

All considered, with political party membership in the transnational context, it is not surprising that it differs drastically from the conventional understanding of party membership, which is understood mostly as a formal one despite also varying according to the party. Moreover, challenges of the party's reach to non-resident sympathisers and the inability to obtain reliable comparative data complicate the definition further. This study, by observing Turkey's mainstream political parties, raises an understanding of various types of membership, varying from monthly-fee-paying but inactive members, to active non-citizen members, to members of openly party-supporting organisations who claim that they are members of a party. Such a definition of party membership, what I call 'remote membership' in the transnational realm, relies on the self-declaration of the diaspora members. Aiming at studying a political party from a traditional approach in only one way that excludes the possibility of its transnationality is nothing but a normative approach. Therefore, this dissertation seeks to demonstrate that the party should be studied via both normative and empirical perspectives, which will help redefine not only a political party but also party organisation, partisanship, and membership concepts in the transnational realm.

4.3.3. Concluding remarks on external voting

There are a number of approaches for specific aspects that explain the political transnationalisation of the diasporic groups yet fail to clarify how some historical moments, such as extending voting rights to non-resident nationals, can generate a critical momentum among the various diaspora communities, and how these communities' networks intermingle for the same cause, despite belonging to different transnational social spaces, and create a microcosm (e.g., a political party) and expand the meaning of social spaces.

The role of the diaspora organisations, which have been analysed extensively for their engagements in trajectories of homeland-originating political orientations, has not been broadly combined with external voting. I argue that within research on electoral studies in relation to external voting, there is a methodological and analytical commitment to exploring the phenomenon by limiting it to the citizenship status of the diaspora members (Lafleur, 2013, p. 31; Bauböck, 2009). Despite the Turkish political migrants' existence and their likelihood of citizenship status being self-evident, which constitutes a remarkable amount of literature, the literature produced on external voting surprisingly limits itself to eligible citizens only (Yanaşmayan & Kaşlı, 2019). Thus, once external voting rights are extended to non-resident nationals, while legally, these rights only target eligible citizens, ineligible diaspora members and former citizens are the indirectly targeted group sharing the same transnational social spaces with the former group.

Studies of political parties abroad often put stress on these parties' impact on diaspora organisations. However, this reduced understanding of 'diaspora organisations' disregards the already existing migrant/refugee organisations that have an autonomous structure or independent nature and accordingly, of their own will, may likely develop an interest in homeland political parties and organise/mobilise for them, or new organisations will emerge without an external initiative in favour of some homeland political parties.

Lastly, this thesis recognises the absence of scholarly attention in the political party literature in regard to the parties' abroad reach. The significant elements of a party, such as a party organisation and remote partisanship, are not clearly defined in the transnational context. Therefore, these party elements will be specified in Chapters II and III with the support of empirical evidence and contemporary normative approaches.

5. Research questions and methodology

5.1. Research questions

The literature review in the previous section has verified that the literature on diasporas' mobilisation and external voting has generated detailed knowledge about the present

acknowledgement of diasporas' mobilisation and the capacity of out-of-country voting. Nevertheless, this review of the literature advocates for three significant areas that necessitate further research and recalibration. Firstly, the rich scholarship on transnationalism lacks an approach to explain why some historical moments – for this study, enabling out-of-country voting – may cause diasporas' organisations and their members to act differently one to another. Secondly, it is necessary to acknowledge that the diaspora organisations are not necessarily limited to the homeland political party's lead in their functioning. Thirdly, there is a need to reanalyse and redefine external voting, particularly regarding how campaigning and voter mobilisation have evolved in different countries and contexts and expanded their reach. Accordingly, the extent of external voting cannot be limited to diaspora groups who are eligible electorates.

To address these gaps, this dissertation aims to address the following research question: How does external voting, as a historic political moment, lead diaspora organisations in favour of a homeland political party?

To be able to answer this broad question using the conceptual framework of transnational diaspora mobilisation and external voting, I ask the following three sub-questions regarding the remote HDP partisans in Germany and France throughout Turkey's first extraterritorial general election experiences (the Turkish general elections of June 2015, November 2015, and June 2018):

1. How and why do diaspora organisations mobilise for a homeland political party during the electoral process from the countries in which they are based?
2. How does voting eligibility impact the patterns of political engagement in the case of external voting?
3. What incentives do diaspora organisations/individuals have to become pro-HDP alliances/partisans in Germany and France?

5.2. Methodology

This section outlines the selected cases, the methodological approach used for this dissertation, the methods used to gather data, and the methods referred to for analysing the collected data. I

sought to incorporate a wide variety of primary and secondary sources into my research, which will be detailed below.

The Peoples' Democratic Party (Turkish: *Halkların Demokratik Partisi*, HDP) was chosen for the reasons I have already stated in the *Rationale of the Study* section. Yet, bearing the research questions in mind, I will underline once more in detail why this party was chosen, with the help of three highly correlated points:

(1) As stated, turnout of non-resident nationals for the elections of their countries is remarkably lower than that of resident nationals, which causes a great deal of scholars, despite the democratic theory, to wonder why it is even made possible. Turkey, in that respect, is a unique case, having already hit the 50 percent turnout rate within less than six years of external voting experience. Interestingly, however, in-country general election results are mismatched with the out-of-country results regarding the competing political parties' proportional vote gains. The HDP showed exceptional success as the results from the extraterritorial ballot boxes in Germany and France put this newly established party higher than the in-country ballots cast in favour of the HDP.[10] This situation has already attracted media attention since the first general election that included non-resident voters was held in June 2015, yet scholars did not pay as much attention to investigating this intriguing phenomenon. (2) The challenges that the homeland political parties need to face to reach the nationals who reside abroad are, by and large, offering more fairgrounds for elections on out-of-country soil. (3) This situation accordingly reminds us of what Rolfe (2012, p. 15) stated about the mobilisation effect, which is that the salience of the election would increase among those who are exposed to political mobilisation. Thus, investigating the exterritorial electoral success of a newly established political party would offer an exemplary opportunity to underline the significance of the rooted diaspora organisations and their members who could turn into partisan groups in the course of a historical political moment such as external voting. This combination of instances would lead to the mobilisation of the voters. HDP's remote alliances, in such a moment, demonstrated and made use of their mobilising capacity, as is reflected in the vote share. Therefore, the HDP is becoming the

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[10] Proportionally, the largest extraterritorial support for the HDP in the Turkish legislative elections was seen in the polling stations of the UK, Finland, Japan, and Switzerland, drawing more than 45 percent of the total votes cast. The HDP was also the most voted party in 12 countries (and tied with the CHP in Greece) in the June 2015 elections, nine countries in the November 2015 elections, and seven countries in the 2018 elections (YSK, 2020).

plausible case party to understand the complex remote-organisational model of a homeland political party that, in the absence of party officials or satellites in destination countries, still gains remarkable support, in which these mostly independent and different ethnic, belief, and political associations have other interstices that led them to generate a microcosm.

Experts on oppressed diasporas from Turkey might not find the extraterritorial electoral success of the HDP unexpected. Indeed, other parameters that prepared the result cannot be overlooked, such as the size of the political refugee diaspora and the highly dynamic networking activities they developed over the years following their arrivals. Unfortunately, however, the extraterritorial turnouts, albeit higher compared to the world trend of expats' turnout, are still low. In other words, the turnout rate is not high enough to let us claim that the size of these groups was the primary indicator of this expected outcome. Nevertheless, these features make this party an interesting example for examining the position of diaspora organisations in contemporary external voting studies and granting their deserved attention, which comes not necessarily from the home country's diaspora politics and engagement strategies, but from the strong engagement capability of diaspora organisations, whether together, independently of each other, and/or in spite of each other.

As the country with the largest Turkish diaspora in the world, with the capacity to change the Turkish electoral balance for the presidential elections particularly,[11] Germany offers an ideal context in which to examine and begin to understand how Turkish political parties mobilise supporters and which strategies they adopt to challenge the abroad limitations in order to be successful in their mobilisation efforts. According to recent data, over 3.1 million Turkish citizens living abroad were eligible to vote, with more than 1.4 million of them in Germany (see Figure 3). Given these numbers, it is not surprising that Germany is the target of Turkey-based political parties' largest political mobilisation efforts. Bearing in mind that the entire Turkish electorate comprises about 59 million eligible voters, the share of those in Germany is around 2.5 percent. However, despite the addition of eligible non-resident voters, more than 5 percent of the total Turkish electorate, no significant study has yet analysed this important group. Moreover, the existing studies on Turkey's external voting experience tend to explore single elections, focusing on relatively narrow dimensions of electoral behaviour or on Turkey's role in diaspora

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[11] 50 per cent plus one vote is required to elect the president of Turkey.

mobilisation (Abadan-Unat et al., 2014; Akgönül, 2017; De Lazzari, 2019; Şahin Mencütek & Akyol Yılmaz, 2015; Şahin Mencütek & Başer, 2018; Sevi et al., 2020).

Findings in this dissertation are based on several rounds of field research in Germany and France, as well as a couple of times in Turkey between 2015 and 2020. I initially decided to work on Germany and France for three reasons, and a fourth reason appeared with the findings. First and foremost, these two neighbouring countries have the two largest Turkey-originating diasporas globally, including both economic and political migrants. Germany and France thus serve as crucial paradigms for the role of the local political diaspora organisations' mobilisations, rather than the Turkish political parties' campaigns, in generating the voter volume for the home-originating political party.

Secondly, Germany and France are cases of established Western European democracies, which allowed me to narrow my focus on the Turkish diasporas rather than comparing these host countries or their relation to their domestic diasporas. Thus, the selection of Germany and France as country cases does not serve a comparative purpose, as one might expect from a study that includes multiple cases. My comparative methodological approach is based on a search for a common causality to explain a homeland political party's electoral victory in the largest residence countries of a nation in *the context of zero-sum racial politics* in the home country in which that party is not as successful. This study aims to answer the main research question about diaspora organisations that have developed different interests in the same party from their homeland. As mentioned above, the material has been gathered to discover differences, commonalities, and variations of the diaspora organisations in their mobilisation exercises for a homeland political party, which did not necessitate a systematic comparison of the country cases.

Figure 3. Turnout rates of the Turkish elections at the Germany polling stations (between 2014 and 2018)

Elections	Number of ballot boxes or Missions	Number of registered voters	Total number of voters	Voter turnout	
				At the missions	Border crossings
August, 2014 Presidential	500 ballot boxes at 7 missions (out of 1186)	1,383,042 (out of 2,798,726)	261,893 (18.9 %)	112,705 (8.1 %)	149,188 (10.8 %)
June, 2015 General	79 ballot boxes at 13 missions (out of 427)	1,405,015 (out of 2,866,979)	Not available	482,746 (Not available)	DE not available[12]
Nov., 2015 General	At 13 missions (out of 113).	Not available (out of 2,899,069)	Not available	575,564 (Not available)	4.8 %[13] DE not available[14]
April, 2017 Referendum	At 13 missions (out of 120).	1,430,134	Not available	660,666	DE not available
June, 2018 Presidential	At 13 missions (out of 123).	1,441,760 (out of 3,044,837)	Not available	661,299	DE not available
June, 2018 General	At 13 missions (out of 123).	1,441,760 (out of 3,044,837)	Not available	660,091	DE not available

Source: Compiled by author using YSK (2020)

[12] In total 124.432 non-resident citizens voted, which equals to the 4.34 percent of the total registered non-residents citizens.

[13] 60.640 citizens residing in Germany voted at the border crossings makes the participation rate 45.07 percent.

[14] In total 138.454 non-resident citizens voted, equals to 4.78 percent of the total registered non-residents citizens.

Thirdly, the ground for selecting Germany and France is the similar demographic profile of the Turkish diasporas in these residence countries. Due to the proximity of these two countries, the migration waves from Turkey have brought about by similar demographic profiles of the focus groups, and accordingly they present similarity. Some researchers have already supported this argument that it is "not the migration context as such but the specific conditions, notably the more significant geographical distance, which are influential" (Baykara-Krumme & Fokkema, 2019, p. 17). There are so many common variables, such as the historical origins of the diasporas, the evolution of the diaspora associations, these associations' strong collaboration and similar responses to the newly emerging party, and the host countries' similarities in respect to democracy and economy. One may, as expected, ask why two highly similar country cases – concerning their Turkey-originating diasporas – are chosen, and question whether the argument can be watertight with only two cases. The initial reason was a pragmatic one which had to do with feasibility: these two countries are where my two partner universities are located. In fact, I started my research as a single-country study in Germany, yet the fourth reason for selecting these countries – showing the transnational linkages through home country attachments between two residence countries and answering the question of why some diaspora organisations in those two similar countries act very much in line throughout the sending country's electoral periods – was only possible by including France as a country case that is similar to Germany in many relevant ways.

For these two case countries, the data collection focused on the following two types of actors/agencies, with the first group leading to the second one: (a) actors who mobilise non-resident voters in their host countries, (b) institutionalised diaspora groups that show open support to the case political party. The first group consisted mainly of institutionalised diaspora members who voluntarily took part in the electoral process as partisans of the HDP, ranging from highly skilled individuals to homemakers, from eligible voters to ineligible citizens (refugee diasporic groups). On the other hand, the second category emerged as an unexpected outcome of observing the first category, which showed that the first category of actors is part of these diaspora organisations. In both countries, the diaspora members who were partisans of the HDP were primarily accumulated under certain diaspora organisations that clearly supported the party throughout the Turkish general elections. My interview participants thus included, but were not limited to, the individuals who were part of a diaspora organisation and showed clear indications

as partisans for the HDP. To the first category, I also added other political party partisans, journalists, and HDP party elites in the country cases or in Turkey.

Four types of sources were used in order to complete this thesis on diaspora mobilisation for a homeland political party following the granting of enfranchisement to non-resident nationals.

Firstly, I used the existing literature on diasporas and their political mobilisation and immigrant transnationalism to establish a theoretical and conceptual framework upon which to set up my analysis. I could not necessarily make use of the literature that focuses on external voting because of the limited and primarily normative perspective that has been produced. Nevertheless, this dissertation has a robust historical dimension as it tries, in the first chapter, to understand the conditions under which the homeland political party structure, through the electoral legislation over the decades, has generated a unique way of support or representation system in the country's understanding of democracy, which has likely had an impact on the diaspora organisations' mobilisation for the homeland political parties as partisans. For this purpose, specialised literature on the political party, electoral legislation, and sending state–diaspora relations was of particularly great help, even though this literature has approached the topic of out-of-country voting only slightly.

Secondly, I have reviewed the detailed election results that this study engages in, as well as the party programmes of the most-voted parties. Furthermore, certain policy documents were found to be relevant to the purpose of this study, including the parliamentary debates and motions that took place at the Turkish parliament from 1987 to 2018; publicly available related parliament reports on external voting were also analysed in light of the media coverage on the issue. Scrutinising Turkish parliamentary decisions and the opposition party motions helped me understand the bigger picture of the diaspora politics of the governing party, as well as where to locate my case political party in that bigger picture among the other parties regarding their approach to external voting.

Thirdly, I have used social media as an important source throughout my research. Preliminary research for this thesis included a basic analysis of the social media accounts of the Turkish political parties and the accounts for these political parties by diaspora members that operate for the non-resident electorates. Checking the social media accounts of the diaspora organisations concerning their homeland party support assisted me in identifying the changing positions of

different actors/agencies on the issue. Additionally, I looked at the Turkish political parties' activities through the most popular social media platforms (YouTube, Facebook and Twitter). Going through these accounts in relation to who controls them helped me to understand better how and to what extent the sending country political parties were actually included in mobilising or informing their abroad target population, and which residence countries were more popular for accounts controlled through Turkey or other official headquarters, or, for accounts controlled by diaspora groups, how independent these diaspora members are from the party's official units.

The relevant data from the above-mentioned sources were gathered from the online libraries of the Grand Assembly, Supreme Court, and Turkish Statistical Foundation; from the Kurdish Institute of Paris; from diaspora organisations in multiple sites in Germany and France; from internet websites; and from personal archives of some individuals.

Lastly, however, most of the findings in this study rely on data gathered with actors/agents in the field, embracing two qualitative data collection methods: participant observation and semi-structured in-depth interviews. These are combined with background research involving intense engagement with document analysis (available membership data of the diaspora associations), interviews with non-case party sympathisers (even though this knowledge has no direct relevance to the research questions, as this work aims to understand the informal practices of HDP supporters' political engagement as partisans in the residence countries), and the mobilisation of diaspora organisations independent of this political party but building the party organisation abroad (referred to as 'satellites' in this study) during the first general elections as the extraterritorial experiences of the Turkish electoral periods in 2015 and 2018.

It was significant to use a research method which would capture rich narrative data formed by interviewees. Quantitative methods would not have been able to answer the thesis's research questions, which are primarily concerned with how and why diaspora organisations mobilise for a homeland political party and form the party remotely, without the party's direct involvement. The exploratory nature of these questions characterised this research, and as such, qualitative methods were considered the most suitable. Thus, given the study's objectives, interviews and participant observation were necessary data collection methods, complemented by the aforementioned three sources.

The following analysis draws on material collected from a total of 62 semi-structured thematic in-depth interviews (see Appendixes 1, 2, 3, and 4) in Germany, France, and Turkey between May 2015 and November 2020. All interviews were directly conducted by me, mostly in Turkish and partially in German, French, and Kurdish. The 'ethnographic present' (Sanjek, 1991) in this study refers to that 5.5-year period. The last six months of the field research planned between April and November 2020 in Paris were faced with the difficulties that the Covid-19 pandemic brought about. I therefore could not conduct the 10 planned interviews in person, but instead conducted four interviews through the online platforms Zoom and Telegram.

Forty-four of these interviews were with HDP supporters of local diaspora organisations, four were conducted with HDP party elites, 12 were conducted with other competing parties' remote supporters, and six were conducted with non-partisan NGO members and journalists. Additionally, I had informal conversations with around 265 participants at various events (see Appendix 5), and 15 eligible voters completed a pilot questionnaire. Twelve of the interviews and approximately 30 of the informal conversations were conducted during the preliminary fieldwork with various partisans and electorates at polling stations in Germany. As the product of the preliminary ('pilot') research, questionnaires were designed to produce a general idea about the voter demographics as well as attitudes right after the electoral period of June 2015.

The preliminary fieldwork helped me in more than a few respects. Firstly, it facilitated distinguishing the diaspora organisations regarding their relation to the HDP. The case diaspora organisations were selected based on the open support they showed for the HDP throughout the June 2015 Turkish general electoral period as shown in the preliminary study. In addition to this, the preliminary survey provided me with an understanding of how the diaspora organisations function and the complicated network with which they comply. Thus, the selected themes and the organisations explored in Chapter III were the preliminary research findings rather than predefined ones. There was no secondary source I could have benefited from that would have given me the necessary knowledge to get to the organisations I reached via the preliminary findings.

The pilot questionnaire, on the other hand, despite providing a piece of limited information, was not adequate to grasp the diaspora organisations and the active members' relation to informal ties

to these organisations, which led me to conduct in-depth interviews with the selected group members in both countries.

The main field study draws on 61 interviews, consisting of remote supporters of the HDP who were highly active in a diaspora organisation; party elites; other parties' remote supporters; and journalists in Germany, France, and Turkey. The interviews in the case countries were held across Germany and France, primarily but not exclusively in the states of North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW) and Hesse in Germany and the French regions of Grand Est and Île-de-France, with the goal of accumulating data which would come with their differences, commonalities, and variations (for an overview of the interviewed groups, see Appendixes 1, 2 and 3). Twelve different cities were chosen, mostly within the districts mentioned: Bremen, Cologne, Dusseldorf, Essen, Frankfurt, Hamburg, and Wuppertal in Germany, and Colmar, Metz, Mulhouse, Paris, and Strasbourg in France. However, the interviews with two of the party elites took place more than once in Istanbul between 2015 and 2018.

These cities were chosen for two primary reasons. The first one is the logistical opportunity that came with my location throughout my studies. Living in the NRW and Strasbourg made it easier to reach the interviewees in a course of time that would enable me to develop familiarity with my focus organisations. The second reason is that the chosen cities offered diversity and accordingly a broader representation of the HDP partisans, which fit the study's target: Paris and Cologne are not only large cities but also important sources of the Kurdish movement abroad, Strasbourg is a mid-size city yet has the most dynamic Alevi population of France and an active Federation of Democratic Workers' Associations (Turkish: *Demokratik İşçi Dernekleri Federasyonu*, DIDF-France) group, while Essen and Wuppertal are equivalent cities in Germany. Nevertheless, I acknowledge that including cities like Berlin in Germany[15] or Marseille in France[16] would have offered a more solid ground to make a broader generalisation (eg., see Graphs 2 and 3).

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[15] See Veysi Dag's (2017) dissertation for the Kurdish diaspora in Berlin.

[16] See the article of Zuhal Karagöz (2017) that focuses on the Kurds in Marseille.

Graph 2. Four most voted Turkish parties at the Germany polling stations (June 2015 and November 2015 elections)
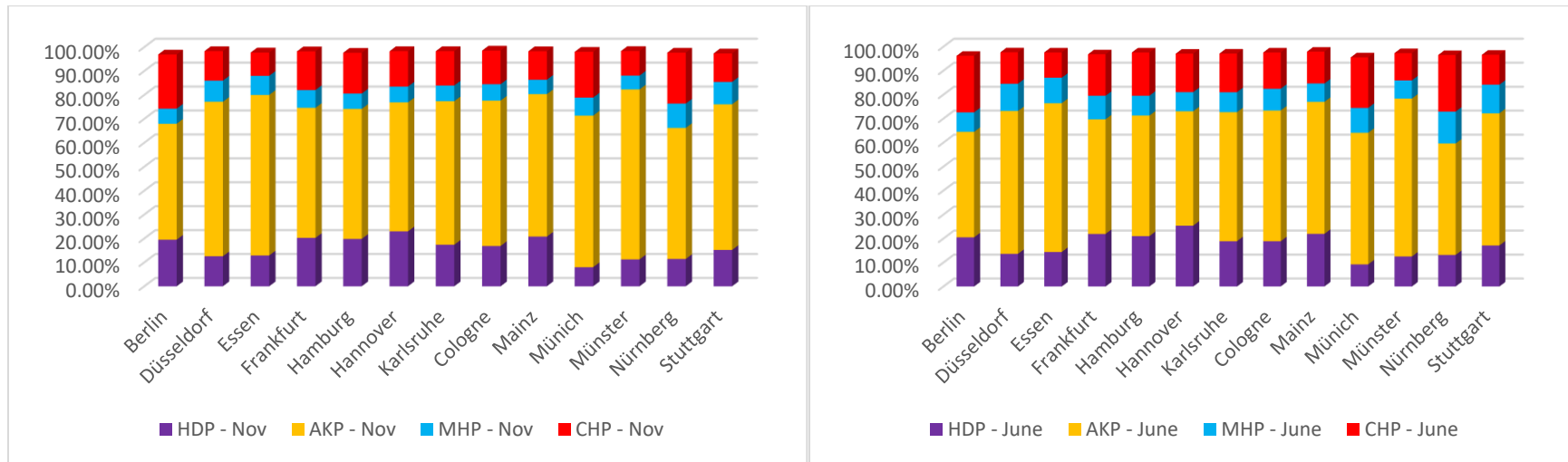
Source: Compiled by author using YSK (2020)

Graph 3. Four most voted Turkish parties at the France polling stations (June 2015 and November 2015 elections)
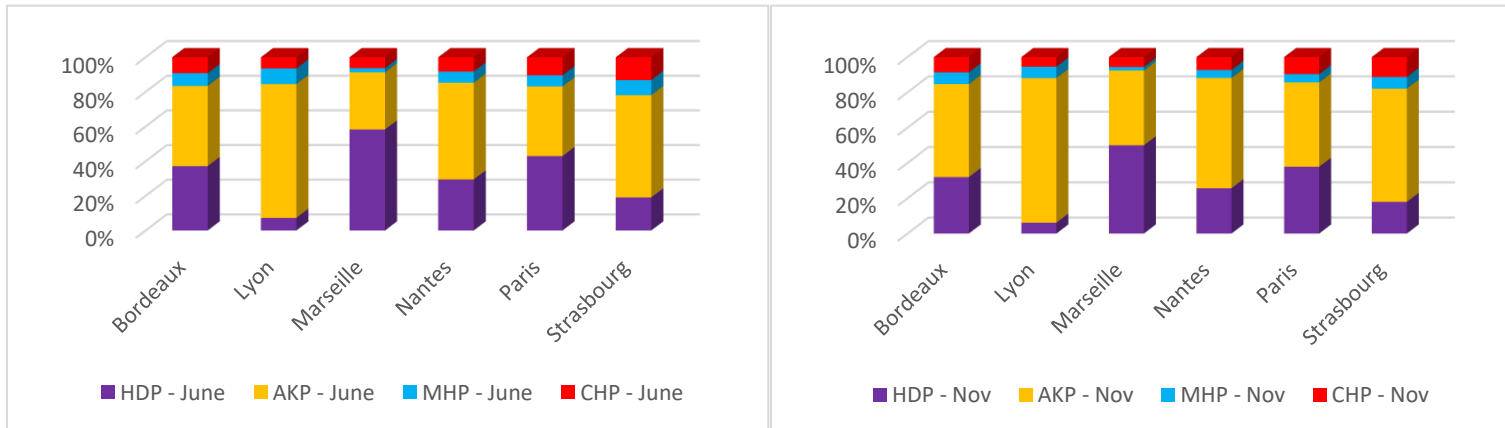
Source: Compiled by author using YSK (2020)

Reaching some of the interviewees necessitated a few months to establish trust, and also required me to start learning Kurdish. 'Snowball sampling' was beneficial to gain access to interviewees that have a broader representation of the target of the study at hand. Field notes were gathered to record circumstantial information, which also included living for a few days at some of the interviewees' residences. Interviews therefore lasted between 60 minutes and a few days and repeated with most of the participants, which stretched to five years.

Extending the fieldwork period not only gave me a chance to avoid putting pressure on either the interviewees or myself but also helped me immensely to observe the 'change in the making' – in other words, how the interviewees have evolved within and outside their diaspora organisations and how these organisations changed for the party not only in relation to Turkey but also among each other. For example, the extended fieldwork time was the main reason I could create my sub-categorisation on the partisanship attitudes of the interviewees. Single interviews would not have made this possible.

As stated, the interviews between May 2015 and November 2019 were held face-to-face. When follow-up information was needed, second or third interviews with numerous interviewees were held via phone call, WhatsApp video talk, or Skype video talk. However, a large number of my formal interviews and conversations did not take place in the first 1.5 years of the fieldwork. As stated above, the first 1.5 years of the fieldwork focused more on the preliminary research to understand my case countries, my focus groups in these countries, and Turkey's new electoral experience. Thus, in the first 1.5 years of the fieldwork was largely limited to the Turkish general electoral periods lasted respectively 24 (May 8–31, 2015) and 18 (October 8–25, 2015) days in Germany (Cologne, Dusseldorf and Essen) and France (in Paris and Strasbourg). The fieldwork that I carried on which was not only limited to the electoral periods, nevertheless, included another general electoral period which lasted 18 (June 7–24, 2018) days (see Table 3).

Table 3. Voting implementation for the non-resident registered voters in the Turkish elections (between 2011 and 2018)

Elections	**Voting methods**	**Duration [dates]**		**Conditions**
		At border crossings	**At diplomatic missions**	
June 2011 General*	(1)	24 days [10.05-12.06.2011]	n/a	(a)
August 2014, Presidential	(1), (2)	16 days [26.07-10.08.2014]	1 to 4 days [31.07-03.08.2014]	(b)
June 2015, Legislative	(1), (2)	31 days [08.05-07.06. 2015]	1 to 24 days [08-31.05. 2015]	(c)
November 2015, Legislative	(1), (2)	25 days [08.10-01.11.2015]	1 to 18 days [08.10-25.10.2015]	(d)
April 2017, Referendum	(1), (2)	21 days [27.03-16.04.2017]	1 to 14 days [27.03-09.04.2017]	(e)
June 2018, Presidential and Legislative	(1), (2)	18 days [07.-24.06.2018]	1 to 13 days [07.06.-19.06.2018]	(f)

Note: Election duration decisions made by the Supreme Electoral Council of Turkey were discretionary.

*The last election held before enabling the external voting

(1) Polling stations (PSs) at permanent or temporary border crossings.

(2) PSs at the diplomatic missions or designated polling stations

(a) PSs were set up at 25 border crossings.

(b)   1. PSs were set up at 41 border crossings and 54 countries (103 PSs).
        2. Appointment was required at the designated PS for voting.

(c)   1. PSs were set up at 33 border crossings and 54 countries (112 PSs).
        2. Voting was possible at the local diplomatic missions.

(d)   1. PSs were set up at 30 border crossings and 54 countries (113 PSs).
        2. Voting was possible at the local diplomatic missions.

(e)   1. PSs were set up at 31 border crossings and 57 countries (117 PSs).
        2. Voting was possible at the local diplomatic missions.

(f)   1. PSs were set up at 34 border crossings and 60 countries (123 PSs)
        2. Voting was possible at the local diplomatic missions

Source: Adapted from Yener-Roderburg (2020).

I also gathered data from participant observation. In total, I have observed and/or taken part in 27 events in relation to pro-HDP groups' mobilisation through diaspora associations and these associations' in the election-free periods (see Appendix 5 for an overview of the observed events). I spent considerable time at each event I joined, from a couple of hours to 14 hours at most.

The events I took part in can be divided into four categories:

(1) Pre-election period: I was involved in five events, including rallies and protests.

(2) Throughout the electoral period: I attended nine events such as being a balloting committee member and an electorate.

(3) Post-election period: I participated in six events during the post-voting periods, including election victory celebrations, participation in meetings, and volunteering with an online community consisting of a non-partisan NGO checking the external votes cast.

(4) Events held by the case organisations throughout the election-free period: I joined in eight diverse events such as Nawroz celebrations, solidarity picnics, protest marches, language courses, and commemorations.

5.3. Ethics

To protect the participants from harm, especially given that many of them belonged to political refugee groups and some were highly active in radical opposition factions, the interviewees' identities are withheld and represented only with unique numbers belonging to each interviewee throughout the dissertation. The universities' guidelines also recommend this anonymity. Yet I have also changed other information that could allow participants to be identified, such as specific roles that each participant had at their affiliated organisation, and where the interviews took place. In addition to anonymising identities in every way, I have followed the ethical protocol; the participants signed participant agreement forms after being informed about their rights in the course of interviews and/or observations. From the beginning of the interview, only

five of my interviewees did not give me their real names and relevant biographical information despite accepting being part of my study. They legitimise this decision by stating that it was for my security as they were still active in the Workers Party of Kurdistan (Kurdish: *Partîya Karkerên Kurdistan*, or Turkish: *Kürdistan İşçi Partisi* or *Apocular*, PKK), which is classified as a terrorist organisation in the location in which the fieldwork took place. The majority of the interviewees preferred that I take notes rather than record, so only some of the completed interviews were voice recorded.

5.4. Positionality

In research that heavily relies on qualitative research, the positionality and identity of the researcher, which would shape the interpretations of data, surely impact the findings (Markova, 2009; Sánchez-Ayala, 2012). This thesis has a variety of qualitative methods, from participant observations to lengthy conversations and in-depth interviews with the respondents; I shared a common ethnic background with most of the respondents, and with many, I shared a common belief.

In the events and interviews from which I have gathered my data, I did so from what Carling and his colleagues (2014, p. 38) call the position of the 'insider' researchers who "are migrants or descendants or migrants and do research on their own immigrant group". Conducting this research as a Turkish citizen made me relevant to the extraterritorial electoral period as an eligible non-resident voter as well as a balloting committee member. The electoral process 'insiderness' came, as Colic-Preisker (2004) suggests, from the language commonality, yet also through my Turkish citizenship. If I did not hold citizenship, there would be no possibility of getting a more authentic result than what I have now.

However, when it comes to my focus group, the HDP supporters, my status as a first-generation migrant woman who is ethnically half Kurdish and part of the Alevi religious community came both as a weakness and a strength of this work. The major strength was that the organisations were somewhat more accepting and open to my study interests. When my ethnicity or religious belief was not playing a role, one interviewee even turned out to be my mother's second cousin.

Nevertheless, being accepted as an 'insider' before being an 'insider' was not easy. My ethnic and religious identity had clear limitations deriving from my lack of Kurdish language skills as half Kurdish, and lack of Alevi belief knowledge as an Alevi. Even though this work does not aim to deal with either of these forms of knowledge in depth, the expectations of the interviewees knowing my identity as part of their community made me aware that I at least needed to start learning the Kurdish language and to learn about Alevism in the diaspora. Despite my initial intention of making these efforts to have a better understanding of my interviewees and to fulfil the ethnic and religious cliché for them, in time, I have realised specific changes in my approaches with the new inputs to my self-defined identities that I have built in Turkey by my family over the past five years of my PhD studies. The personal relationships that I have built with many of my interviewees have grown over five years, making each of them important for me by now. Being a first-generation migrant abroad without family members besides my own here (my German husband and two young children), I have been embraced by people who found the commonality in me, more than I saw in them, which I gladly accept and cherish to this day.

On the other hand, my practical/relative distance from the HDP partisanship, Kurdishness, the Kurdish movement, Aleviness, and being a first-generation diaspora member gave me a perspective and point of comparison as what Carling and his colleagues (2014, p. 38) call an outsider researcher who "belong*s* to the majority population and do research on specific immigrant groups". Additionally, due to my continuous contact with most of the interviewees, I believe I have developed the ability to pay attention to what was being said and done by the interviewees rather than what was intended.

Elaborating mobilisation/partisanship across a relatively broad geographic space to generate and then maintain a wide network of interviewees was possible, I firmly believe, thanks to my position as both 'insider' and 'outsider', of as some studies refer as 'hybrid insider-outsider' (Carling et al., 2014). This also minimised the sample bias as translation was not a need, which can also be assumed from the way my predefined assumptions were drastically altered with the field findings.

5.5. Data analysis

As stated earlier, I have conducted semi-structured thematic in-depth interviews. The predefined themes included the participants' biographical information; their knowledge of the HDP, of the other parties, and of the election procedure independent of their voting eligibility; their forms of political participation and their strategies; their citizenship status; their knowledge of current Turkey politics and Kurdistan politics; and their perspective on the resident country's stance for the politics of Turkey, Kurdistan, and Turkish elections. Additionally, I have conducted 'thematic coding' (Gibson & Brown, 2009) using NVivo in order to detect the other relevant themes if there were more, and if there were fewer, to narrow them down for my research. Firstly, I coded for diasporas' mobilisation for extraterritorial elections through two actors/agencies: the diaspora members and the diaspora organisations, coded either separately or combined (see section 4.1. above).

Secondly, I coded for voting eligibility: (1) non-voter and (2) voter. Under these legal sanctions there emerged three subgroupings of what this study calls 'non-voters', while the eligible non-resident voters are coded as 'voters'. From this study's point of view, the non-voters are: (1) Non-citizens: a German or French citizen with Kurdish/Turkish ethnic origin who has never acquired Turkish citizenship; (2) Unnaturalized citizen: a former Turkish citizen with Kurdish/Turkish ethnic origin who has become a German or French citizen willingly, or who has been obliged to choose one of the citizenships and intentionally preferred to hold the German or French citizenship; (3) Refugee: a Turkish citizen with Kurdish/Turkish ethnic origin who resides in Germany and France under refugee status or who acquired the resident country citizenship after meeting the required conditions.

Thirdly, I coded for 'party support degrees' – (1) veritable (which encompasses a few of the themes I chose initially), (2) situational and (3) precarious – via the incentives of the diaspora institutions (in Chapter II) and the incentives of these institutions' members and other non-institutional individuals (in Chapter III). These three divisions of party support degrees is inspired by Duverger's book *Political Parties* on "degrees of participation"[17] (1976, p. 90), in which he identifies the following three interdependent and interactional ideal typical categories:

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[17] Duverger (1976) describes the "degrees of 'participation' – if we can so speak of the link which binds the individual to the party", a question which "leads us to investigate the real nature of participation, to define the

(1) militant: "The militant is an active member: the militants form the nucleus of each of the party's basic groups, on which its fundamental activities depend. Within the branch, for example, there is always to be found a small circle of members, markedly different from the mass, who regularly attend meetings, share in the spreading of the party's slogans, help to organize its propaganda, and prepare its electoral campaigns. These militants constitute a kind of caucus within the branch. They are not to be confused with the leaders: they are not directors but executives; without them it would not even be possible to carry out any activities" (1976, pp. 109–110).

(2) supporters: "the supporter is an elector [the third category], but more than an elector: he acknowledges that he favors the party; he defends it and sometimes he supports it financially; he even joins bodies ancillary to the party" (1976, p. 90). "A further step is taken if the declaration of sympathy does not remain purely passive but is accompanied by some positive effort in favor of the party: regular reading of its newspapers, attendance at its rallies and public meetings, contributions to its funds, propagandist activities like canvassing and so on. Imperceptibly, unalloyed sympathy can be transformed into true membership and even into militancy" (1976, p. 102).

(3) electors: "The widest comprises the electors who vote for the candidates put forward by the parties at local and national elections" (1976, p. 90). "The elector votes in the secrecy of the polling-booth and does not reveal the choice he has made. The very precision and amplitude of the measures taken to ensure the secrecy of the ballot prove the importance of its secrecy. An elector who says how he has voted is no longer solely and elector: he is on the way to becoming a supporter" (1976, p. 102).

Duverger's degrees of participation cannot be applied directly to members and institutions in the case of remote voting, considering that Duverger focused not only on the eligible voters but also

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content of the sociological bond which unites the members of the community to which we give the name 'party'" (p. 61) in order to name the degrees of participation.

on the in-country structure of the parties. However, as stated earlier, the literature lacks the necessary measurements that would help us figure out the formal and informal differences between the citizens and non-citizens and the other groups that reside abroad. In other words, without the legal status of citizenship, the person who does not vote but otherwise has full involvement in the electoral process of homeland elections is excluded from Duverger's levels of participation despite having an impact on the electoral process (1976). Therefore, this study uses a new categorisation that is parallel yet has a more stretched meaning: (1) veritable instead of 'militants', (2) situational instead of 'supporters', and (3) precarious instead of 'electors'.

Thirdly, I coded for the citizenship of the groups (see Chapter III). Grouping the institutions and individuals according to their degree of support in respect to their motivation, as well as investigating further on voting eligibility, has helped me to see whether each individual or group tends to show that they belong in the same organisation despite voting eligibility being an insignificant indicator for all groups. I have also coded the other themes, though particular emphasis was given to the three previously mentioned. This situation helped me to answer the research questions with a satisfactory structure. Although most of the data that I have gathered from the interviews consists of notes and is divided according to the themes that I identified during the interviews, I still used NVivo, which, as noted, ensured that I have a more reliable coding process. Particularly considering the number of variables the interviewees provided, NVivo helped narrow down the data to a great extent and to highlight the surprising outcomes, such as the indifference of voting eligibility in partisan behaviour and organisations' relation to each other. To sum up, I organised my data set through diaspora organisations and by veritable, situational, and precarious modes of being a remote supporter/association, along with side data sets deducted from the findings of these two original sets.

6. Limitations of the study

The law on political parties is not the only means to shape the Turkish political parties and their extensions/reach abroad. For example, independent of the aforementioned law during the AKP rule, the party system in Turkey evolved to a predominant party system (Arslantaş et al., 2020; Ayan-Musil, 2015; Çarkoğlu, 2011; Esen & Ciddi, 2011; Gümüşçü, 2013; Müftüler-Baç & Keyman, 2012). Thus, this study recognises changes in the party system of nations that have an

unavoidable effect on how the parties operate. Moreover, this situation cannot be understood solely by analysing the changes in law enforcement. Studies by Eligür (2010), Hale and Özbudun (2009), Tuğal (2009), and Yeşilada and Rubin (2013) emphasise the role of religion for the changes that have been observed throughout the AKP era; Bozkurt (2013), Gambetti (2009), Gümüşçü (2010), and, Öniş and Şenses (2009) see the changes as neoliberal transformation; while Arslantaş and his co-authors (2020) signify the importance of the electoral system and its direct effect on the creation of the AKP's dominance.

However, this study does not aim to investigate or validate the out-of-country effect of the predominant party system of the AKP government (e.g., Umpierrez de Reguero et al., 2021). It instead aims to interrogate the limits of the party law, how it allows political parties to function abroad, and the capacities of external voters through what the electoral law has enabled.

The HDP mobilisation in Germany and France consists of many different actors and organisations with various motivations. This dissertation focuses on only a few subsets of these actors: larger-scale pro-HDP institutions and some original cases in the country. In addition, I also spent time with small-scale organisations and other factions without a rooted past which promoted the HDP throughout the 2015 general elections. Despite not ignoring the significant influence of all these formations, as well as non-institutionalised individuals, on the HDP for the polls, it was neither feasible nor possible to reach every small brick that took part in the HDP mobilisation in Germany and France. This study, therefore, is not about how ethnic groups and other suppressed minorities from Turkey remotely participate in the electoral process for their homeland political party, the HDP, but about how these groups, mainly through institutions, become agencies/alliances for the HDP, independent from the HDP, from their residence countries. Thus, reaching out to these actors also reflects my choice of topics.

Additionally, this dissertation does not claim to be a comprehensive history of pro-Kurdish political parties in Turkey.[18] However, due to this absence in the field, as a side advantage, this work thoroughly analyses the evolution of external voting rights with Turkey as the case country. Therefore, this work can be referred to on that matter in addition to its specific aim.

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[18] See Güneş (2018), Jongerden and Akkaya (2018), and Watts (1999) for detailed historical background on Turkey's pro-Kurdish political parties.

This dissertation is not intended as a general text on the Kurds from Turkey in diaspora and their political orientation and mobilisation for a pro-Kurdish political party of Turkey, the HDP, but the undeniable voter volume of the HDP in the diaspora was generated through or from the Kurds (see Map 2). Thus, this dissertation will explore the extent of the complex relationship between the Kurds in Germany and France and the HDP by not dismissing the other non-Kurdish-affiliated groups.

The first general elections to include out-of-country ballots were marked by clear allegations of fraud and intimidations, including electoral malpractice not only in-country but also out-of-country – this situation was frequently aroused. This situation, without question, damaged the voters' trust and incentives for casting ballots, particularly among those who were not the ruling party's supporters, because the fraud and other concerns in these elections were the open declaration of the ruling party's efforts to resort to any means to keep its power as the sole governing party. However, this study does not intend to investigate the validity of the external results of the June and November 2015 elections. This point will nevertheless be mentioned in every chapter in order not to overlook, when it comes to electoral law and election security issues, the reason that emerged as the partial motivation that led to the mobilisation of the voters and non-voters. The political field under AKP rule has been changed "through controlling the media, bureaucracy and judiciary, exploiting public resources; and oppressing the opposition" (Arslantaş, 2020, p. 4; Levitsky & Way, 2010).

This thesis does not reject the apparent effect of non-partisan forms of political engagement on the party's extraterritorial success, yet these groups were hard to reach in terms of visibility. However, the contacts that I developed in working on this project led me to some highly engaged self-described non-partisans, from whom I had the chance to gather material for this study. Therefore, although they consist of a small number (two), I have included these specific cases in the analysis due to their unique forms of political engagement.

The feminist/gender dimension of this study is not well detailed. This is not because it was not significant – on the contrary, the gender dimension is critical, and not only because, compared to the rest of the majority of the political organisations, the proportion of female involvement among HDP supporters is significantly higher. But sole female initiations that act as political agents are worth another PhD to investigate, and there are already studies showing the capacity

of this topic (see Bengio, 2016 and Burç, 2019). Therefore, sparing only a section in a chapter would not have given the necessary emphasis that the theme deserves. Thus, the women organisations of this study are limited to their organisational capacity and strategies regarding the homeland elections, without placing stress on their gender-related establishment and functioning.

This study does divide the genders into female and male. Unfortunately, throughout my fieldwork, I did not come across any openly LGBTI+ persons among my focus groups. Therefore, I feel the necessity to state that the findings did not intentionally exclude these groups.

Chapter I

Political Parties, Elections, Representation, and External Voting in Turkey

Investigating a political party that gathers proportionately more voter support abroad than at home is a challenging task. The scarce literature that has paid attention to such specific cases is only one downside of the challenge. The real challenge comes with unpacking a very complex relationship between the highly intermingled chronologically significant events and the law enforcement of the homeland and host a country that comes before or after the events by the ruling parties, which also works hand in hand with the socio-political situation. These are either independent of one another or all resonate together with the transnational voters' organisation/mobilisation for a homeland political party.

Solely focusing on the period after 1987 (when non-resident citizens were given limited rights to vote within the national territory) or after 2012 (when expatriate citizens were granted enfranchisement from their country of residence) would not be sufficient to comprehend the original case that is embodied with the Peoples' Democratic Party supporters (Turkish: *Halkların Demokratik Partisi*, HDP) in Germany and France. The Turkish case shows that the Ottoman political party tradition through the Ottoman Empire's decline, law on political parties, and the electoral law have generated a country governed with a single-party-dominating system, known as a predominant party system. This unique circumstance overlapped with (or intentionally created) the global conjuncture that led to enfranchisement for non-resident nationals. The aim of this dissertation is not to understand why the voting rights of these citizens have been extended. It is to understand why and how out-of-country nationals politically organise and mobilise for homeland political parties through the elections of the sending countries. Therefore, rather than theory-building by focusing on the case and explaining it within its limits, it is necessary to analyse the evidence with the causal explanation of that case with the help of process-tracing methodology (Beach & Pedersen, 2019; Bennett & Checkel, 2015). Of particular importance are the political party history, the changes in political party law and the electoral law, these laws' implementation by the ruling parties, and the non-inclusiveness of the main political parties to

minority groups. Therefore, these concepts require detailed evaluation to better comprehend and analyse the causal mechanism that built the grounds that led expats' incentives/motivation for a small, relatively marginalised and ethnicised homeland political party, the HDP.

In light of this brief background, this chapter will analyse the evolution of the Turkish political parties and elections through the emergence of the Political Parties Act and the Elections Law in Turkey. Firstly, I will briefly mention the historical background on the earlier understandings of political party in Turkey's Republican era that followed the Ottoman legacy, underlining the concepts of unfair representation, unfree and unfair elections, disproportionate representation, and predominant party system.

This section will stress the transition from single-party rule to a multi-party era, which took more than four decades, and will show that even then, the multi-party period did not necessarily provide a proportional representation of the voters. Furthermore, this section will show that, including the multi-party era, the Republic of Turkey failed to create the essential socio-political environment that would generate today's understanding of Western democracy, which can be summed up for this study as proportional representation with free and fair elections. Instead, for the Turkish electorate, the representation was reduced participation in elections.

Then, in the second part of the chapter, I will point out the significant legislative changes that the Turkish Constitution went through, starting with the Political Parties Act in the 1961 Constitution and continuing with the significant backlashes such as the coups and the introduction of a highly influential representation model, the d'Hondt system. One of the focal points of the section will be given to the significant legislative changes to the electoral law that polished the predominant party system.

This part will then present how the electoral system led to a predominant party system by using the rules and strategies inherited from the previous authoritarian regime. For this reason, this section will detail the 1982 Constitution, written in the wake of the 1980 military coup, which made marginal changes to the electoral system that left little to no space for fair and proportionate representation. Furthermore, the d'Hondt representation model was a game-changer, though not necessarily when first introduced with the 1961 Constitution. When it was merged with the national 10 percent threshold that the 1982 Constitution brought about, the

d'Hondt representation model turned into a very unfair system and became significant at general elections. With these points in mind, I will then show that, despite having parliamentarianism and elections, Turkish citizens' perception of democracy was limited to how the aforementioned concepts, internalised by the public over the decades translated into Turkish political culture. I will further elaborate on how the small parties with this systematised exclusion evolved to represent their supporters or even survive as a competing party.

The third and final part of this chapter will focus on the evolution of external voting legislation interpreted in the Turkish context from the late 1980s to today. Therefore, firstly, the legislative developments that appear as an earlier version of external voting, which this study also refers to as 'the pre-external voting period', will be analysed. This period encompasses the years between 1987 and 2012 and the legislative changes in the Acts in Elections and Political Parties. The 1987 amendment that enabled voting for non-resident citizens at border-crossing points and the 1995 amendment that permitted political parties to set up branches abroad will be the key amendments that will be given attention (see Table 1). Secondly, the legislative paths to external voting and its implementation will be evaluated with the help of the cases of Turkey's first external voting experiences, namely the 2014 presidential election, the June and November 2015 snap general elections, and the 2017 referendum. The main object of the last part of this first chapter is to draw attention to how external voting in theory and practice is used to carry the regime-favouring legacy abroad.

1. Building a symbolic democracy in Turkey: political rights through political parties and electoral legislation

Democratisation in Turkey cannot be fully understood without taking into consideration the transition from the Ottoman Empire[19] to Turkey or by only focusing on the significant legislative changes. "For over a century, Turkish political parties have reflected both the profound changes

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[19] Tarık Zafer Tunaya's (1952, 2001, 2004) books covering the Ottoman Era and the formation of early Turkish political parties are important sources for further information. The edited book by Metin Heper and Jacob M. Landau (1991) *Political Parties and Democracy in Turkey* investigates the early formations of the parties in the Republic of Turkey and draws highly significant historical deductions containing remarkable accounts of the Ottoman Empire case. Furthermore, Huri Türsan (2004) dedicates an important part of her extensive work *Democratisation in Turkey* to the Ottoman Empire.

and the underlying continuity in the country's political history" (Rustow, 1991, p. 10). Therefore, this section firstly acknowledges the Ottoman Empire as the predecessor of Turkey, among others, regarding its lack of a political party culture that would be beneficial to a democratic government (Sarıbay, 1991, p. 127). And therefore, the understanding of political parties was built on intolerance towards the opposition groups. This perspective will help us understand the significant historical background of how opposition groups never had the chance to be part of the decision-making entities in the hands of the powerful ruling parties. Secondly, this section will emphasise the legislative changes to the electoral law and political parties act up until 1987.[20] Here, attention will be given to the critical changes that directly affected the evolution of the political parties in Turkey, which also fed into today's political culture.

Due to the political party perception of the early Republican era, Turkey was not necessarily different from the Ottoman Empire. Therefore, an analysis of the legal norms and practices of Republican Turkey cannot be evaluated without understanding the Ottoman constitution and its laws and parties. Despite the political regime change of Turkey from an empire to a republic, the causal mechanism of the elections and the party formations remained highly connected to the Ottoman legacy. Therefore, I will first summarise the regime change and the change in the governance system from underground political parties to parliamentarianism. Secondly, I will display how incumbent parties have used their power to reduce the ability of opposition parties to perform in the political scene. Then, I will show how these early party formations and early practices of parliamentarianism in Turkey have introduced legislative changes and measurements that strongly embedded the concepts of unfree and unfair elections, unfair and disproportionate representation, and the predominant party system into the Turkish understanding of democracy.

Lastly, I will point out how the political parties from the early Republican days have approached party membership. Their approach has clarified their non-inclusive formations, which also determined the polarisation among ethnic and religious groups concerning these groups' political representation. The September 1980 military coup is the cut-off point of this section since the results of this coup, along with the Constitution that emerged as a result of it in 1982 and generated a new era for the political parties in Turkey, will be underlined in Section 2.

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[20] 1987 is chosen as the cut-off point for this section in order to separate the pre-external voting period from the post-external voting period.

1.1. Political parties, parliamentarianism, and elections

The Ottoman Empire, as in the non-Western world, took another century to have political parties in today's sense (Duverger, 1974, p. 15). In the Ottoman Empire, other forms of ideological groups such as philosophy clubs were known before the 1900s. However, today's understanding of political parties, in which parties elected by the majority of voters are allowed to form a government for a definite period, overlapping with the start of Turkey's multi-party parliaments during the mid-1940s.

The crisis and eventual decline of the Ottoman Empire coincided with the period of the emergence of political parties in the Empire, which could also be seen as the answer to the crisis. This period was also overlapping with the evolution of party development in the nineteenth century,[21] which has become the essence of the modern political parties of Turkey (Türsan, 2004, p. 26). However, until the Second Constitutional Era[22] (Turkish: *İkinci Meşrutiyet* 1908-1920), the Ottoman Sultans did not establish any official political foundation/organisation/union within the Empire. Thus, any formation that had its origins in a political movement remained undercover until the Second Constitution under the rule of Abdülhamit II was brought in 1909. In other words, the "political factions,[23] cliques, groupings were not political parties in the modern sense" (Türsan, 2004, p. 26). Therefore, when we talk about Turkey's political party system and its first embodiment as a political party, we can only talk about an underground organisation that was formed in 1859 named the Society of Self-Sacrifice (Turkish: *Fedâiler Cemiyeti* or *Şeriatı Tutma Cemiyeti*) in the Ottoman territory (Sevinç, 1997, p. 633).[24] However, it is important to note that "no normal party life could have developed in an entity such as the Ottoman Empire in its final phase of decay – pressured as it was by European imperialism from outside and minority nationalism from within" (Rustow, 1991, pp. 10–11). Therefore, even

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[21] The political parties then were not implying that masses were involved. Samuel P. Huntington calls this period the first phase of factionalism rather than political parties. (See Türsan, 2004, p. 26).

[22] The Second Constitutional Era of the Ottoman Empire is the constitutional period that started in 1908 to restore the constitutional monarchy by the revival of the Ottoman Parliament.

[23] Türsan (2004, p. 26) uses Dennis C. Beller and Frank P. Belloni's (1978) definition of 'faction', which is "an organised group that exists within the context of some other group and which (as a political faction) competes with rivals for power advantages within the larger group of which it is a part" (p. 419).

[24] For more information of the party activity in the pre-Republican period, please see Türsan (2004).

though the founding reasons of the the Society of Self-Sacrifice are yet to become clear, this group of 60 people was in favour of Sharia law and sought ways to overthrow Abdülmecit due to his sultanate's reformist approaches that formed the *Tanzimat*[25] in 1839. Yet the first elections of the Empire were held only in 1877. Therefore, the Tanzimat period (1839–1876) is the start of the development of representative institutions built on Western models.

The elections prior to the establishment of the Republic of Turkey, as well as the first one held in 1923 right after the establishment of Turkey, were conducted in conformity with the electoral law of 1877, "a product of the Ottoman period" (Koçak, 2005, p. 4). Thus, seeing the 1923 election and the first parliament of Turkey that was set up with the Ottoman Empire rules as the significant step towards reaching the modern understanding of a democratic country does not seem plausible – especially considering that this new country remained under the control of a single party, the Republican People's Party (Turkish: *Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası*, CHF), until 1946. The CHF had ample members from the late Ottoman political establishment (Karpat, 1991, p. 60; Rustow, 1991, p. 11). Between the first Ottoman elections of 1877 and the Turkish multi-party elections of 1946, 13 elections took place.[26] During this relatively long period, the polls did not have any competing party (Türsan, 2004, p. 28).[27] To put it differently, no opposition party was allowed to compete in those elections despite internal disagreements especially during the candidates' selection was known.

The conflicting situation of having a strong one-party system while claiming the new country to be democratic was recognised as solely symbolic in the eyes of the new country's founders, with no practical effect in return. This symbolic democracy adopted by this new country gave birth to a few earlier attempts to build opposition parties against the CHP (Göçek, 2011, p. 26). Mustafa Kemal Pasha appointed some of his friends to two parties that he founded: the Progressive Republican Party (Turkish: *Terakkiperver Cumhuriyet Fırkası*) (1924–1925) and the Liberal

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[25] *Tanzimat* means reorganisation, yet in the Turkish and Ottoman political context, it defines a period of reform that started in 1839 and ended with the First Constitutional Era (Turkish: *Birinci Meşrutiyet Devri*) in 1876.

[26] In the elections of 1877, there was no party affiliation; in the elections of 1908, 1912, 1920, 1931, and 1946 we can talk about an inter-party competition, which will be recalled in the following sections.

[27] These elections were held in 1914, 1919, 1923, 1927, 1935, 1939, and 1943.

Republican Party, or Free Republican Party (Turkish: *Serbest Cumhuriyet Fırkası*) (1930–1931) (Ahmad, 1991; Weiker, 1991).

> Even though his [Atatürk's] friends argued that such opposition parties could take root in society only if they did not run against the party of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, and suggested that he consider stepping down from the leadership of the RPP [CHP] to instead become the politically nonaligned president of the entire country, he chose to retain political control. (Göçek, 2011, p. 26)

The Liberal Republican Party achieved significant success in municipal elections, which might also be seen as the reason for the party's short lifespan (Weiker, 1991, p. 89).

With these two attempts, along with the emergence of other opposition parties, socialist parties (such as the Turkish Socialist Workers and Peasants Party and the Turkish Socialist Party) and some other Islamist parties gained widespread support, and in line with that, the populace started distancing themselves from the CHP, in other words, from the 'Ataturkist regime' (Dodd, 1991, p. 33; Koçak, 2005, p. 14). Due to the increasing support for the opposition parties, the first two directly shut down by Atatürk. As a result, neither of them had the opportunity to stand in any general elections (Koçak, 2005, p. 14). And after the reign of Atatürk, the other mentioned opposition parties were doomed to shut down by the CHP's Council of Ministers. Neither of these parties was allowed by the Republicans to exist in the new so-called democratic political arena longer than a few years, if not less. Dodd (1991) underlines that the early examples of party opposition "would normally be regarded as legitimate in a liberal democracy" (p. 31). Thus, in effect, the transition to a multi-party system was still a heavily regulated process, and not as radical as it could have been, given that the opposition was virtually created by former CHP members and was not welcome to share the seats of parliament, which also meant that the CHP then maintained a tight grip on how the incorporation of a 'multi-party' system was to develop within Turkey.

From 1945 on, other parties started to emerge as the real opposition parties, giving birth to an intra-party competition that eventually led to genuine party competitions. After some failed new

attempts at building opposition parties,[28] multi-partisanism recommenced in 1945 with the introduction of the National Development Party (Turkish: *Milli Kalkınma Partisi,* MKP) led by Nuri Demirağ and other members who had no previous affiliation with the CHP. The MKP was not particularly influential in gaining substantial public support, but this transition created a suitable environment for building an opposition party. This was the brainchild of the then-President and leader of the Republican People's Party, Mustafa Kemal's trusted friend and fellow general İsmet İnönü, who had succeeded him after 1938 (Göçek, 2011, p. 27; Hiç, 2009, pp. 15–17; Özbudun, 2003, pp. 19–20).

In 1946, in order to fulfil the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) membership prerequisites, with the full support of İnönü's CHP, Celal Bayar, a former Republican, established the Democrat Party (Turkish: *Demokrat Parti*, DP) (Sarıbay, 1991). The 1946 General Elections, therefore, can be considered as the first competitive elections in the history of the Republic of Turkey during the Republican era despite this new nation having experienced six elections[29] from its founding in 1923 until that point.

The 1946 election, first actual contested election that was a scene for party competition, had an 'open voting and secret counting' principle and provided no publicly available data on the turnout rate or on the vote share of the two competing parties. The only available information regarding the results of the 1946 General Election is that 465 members of parliament (MPs) won seats in the parliament, of which 395 were from the CHP, 66 were from the DP, and 4 were independent MPs (Hiç, 2009, pp. 17–18; Özbudun, 2003, p. 21). This situation raised the first critiques of the fairness and validity of the election results in the history of Turkish elections, which has not ended to this day. Election safety and fairness emerged following this election as the critical points raised by the DP (Karamustafaoğlu, 1970, p. 108).

Nevertheless, the lack of demand for the Democrat Party or for a change in the constitution was a significant sign that the party was established under the complete control of the Republicans and did not have the strength to vocalise these concerns louder, at least in its early years (Hiç, 2009, p. 16; Özbudun, 2003, p. 23; Rustow, 1991, p. 15). It also was symptomatic of the Republican

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[28] In 1945 and 1946 alone, 15 new parties were founded (Sarıbay 1991, p. 119).

[29] 1923, 1927, 1931, 1935, 1939, and 1943 elections.

interest in maintaining control over the democratic processes within Turkey.[30] The CHP comprised an elite group of politicians that tended to follow the national-based interests of both the military and the state (Heper, 1991, p. 3). The Democrat Party, on the other hand, consisted of a political elite that focused on local and regional demands (Hiç, 2009, pp. 16–17; Özbudun, 2003, p. 35), which included embracing religion (Rustow, 1991, p. 17).

A few months before the election of February 16, 1950, the first election law in the multi-party era was enacted. The most significant gains of that law included, firstly, establishing the Supreme Electoral Council by the Deputies Election Law no. 5545 (see Table 4). This body, which is still in effect, was responsible for free and fair elections and introduced the 'secret ballot casting, open ballot counting' principle against the 1946 elections. The 1950 elections were held according to these new regulations. The DP, with its land reform promoting the liberal economy programme and, more significantly, its conservative stance, which signified its centre-right position, won the 1950 elections by a landslide with the support of the periphery (Frey, 1975; Heper, 1985; Rustow, 1991, p. 17; Sarıbay, 1991, p. 123). The DP had 53.3 percent of the overall votes, while the CHP gained 39.9 percent.

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[30] There were also three conditions stipulated by President İnönü that the new parties had to obey: the secular character of the country would not be changed, foreign affairs would be advanced, and primary school education would be encouraged (Özbudun, 2003, p. 21). Yet the main emphasis was put on the protection of the new democratic feature of the country (Hiç, 2009, pp. 16–17; Özbudun, 2003, p. 22).

Even though more recent literature on this topic has criticised the 'official' version of history presented by the Kemalist regime during this period (Dole, 2013; Houston, 2008), the view presented here, that the Democrat Party and the Republican People's Party were in effect a concerted effort, two sides of the same coin as it were, is not at odds with this critical approach to the history of the period. What is important to the thesis is how the Alevi, as the targets of this apparently dualistic approach to policy, were motivated to move in their allegiance from one Kemalist ideological position to another. Hiç's (2009) and Özbudun's (2003) presentation of the history, in this respect, serves to highlight the popular reception of this "split" in Kemalism during the period.

Table 4. Early electoral laws and law changes in the late Ottoman Era and Turkey

Year	Description	Implemented elections
1908	*Intihab-i Mebusan Kanun-i Muvakkati*: Two-stage process (elections), 1st: voters elected secondary electors (one for the first 750 voters in a constituency, then one for every additional 500 voters). 2nd: the secondary electors elected the members of the Turkish Grand National Assembly.	1923, 1927, 1931, 1935, 1939. 1943.
	Only men could take part in the elections.	1923, 1927 and 1931.
1924	Right to vote is 18, right to be elected is 30.	
	Elections would be repeated every 4 years.	1924 on unless snap elections.
1934	Women were granted the right to vote and run for election.	1935 on.
	The age of voting was raised from 18 to 22.	1935, 1938, 1943, 1946, 1950, 1954, 1957.
1942	Article No. 4320 did no bring anything new to the system, yet this was the first electoral law which made it important.	1943.
1946	The multiple non-transferable vote electoral system	1946, 1950
	Simple majority method by list	1946, 1950, 1954
1950	Direct election is a system of choosing political officeholders in which the voters directly cast ballots for the persons, or political party that they desire to see elected.	1946, 1950, 1954, 1957.
	The age of voting remained as 22, to be elected has become 30.	1950
	The Supreme Electoral Council was established. Elections took place with the "secret voting, open counting" system.	1950 to this day.
1954	Opposition parties radio ban during election campaign, demonstration and meeting ban during non-electoral periods.	
1961	Two parliaments: a Senate (upper house) and a Chamber of Deputies (lower house)	
	Right to elect 21, to be elected remained 30.	
	D'Hondt formula as the representation method.	
1982	Free, fair, secret ballot, open ballot counting, general ballot under security.	1983 on.
	Official Gazette, no. 17863. Elections would be repeated every 5 years.	1983 on.
1983	D'Hondt with regional as well as national threshold (10 percent).	1987 and 1991.
	Quota system.	1987 and 1991.

Source: Compiled by author using YSK (2011)

Nevertheless, the Democrat Party won 470 seats, while the Republican People's Party could only collect 69 seats.[31] The results also showed that the first-past-the-post (FPTP) electoral system at the time, which was inherited from the Kemalist single-party period (a multiple-member plurality system), was a perfect example for 'electoral engineering' while empowering the large parties and underrepresenting the small ones (Norris, 2004), which highly affected even the second-party CHP. But, this new free and fair election of 1950, despite the disproportionate representation it gave rise to, generating a multi-party environment, which was necessary for the political participation history of Turkey, particularly for showing the public that a strong governing party for decades, the CHP, could be changed via the citizens' power in elections. Thus, the DP became the political power that overthrew the decades-long parliamentary sultanate of the CHP.

However, these two parties were not the only ones that secured seats in the parliament. The Nation Party (Turkish: *Millet Partisi*) and an independent candidate from the Mardin district also found seats at the Turkish Grand Assembly (see Figure 4).

The subsequent election in 1954 strengthened the governing position of the DP with 58.4 percent of the vote share. The CHP[32] was the second party, losing some of its support and receiving 35.1 percent of the vote share. The CHP was followed by a new party, the Republican Nation Party (Turkish: *Cumhuriyetçi Millet Partisi*, CMP), which gathered a bit over 5 percent of the overall ballots. Once again, due to FPTP, the DP held on to its super-majority.

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[31] "There was hardly any difference between the programmes of the parties. … They differed about as much as the Republican and Democratic parties in the United States and had more in common than the Labour and Conservative parties in Britain" (Özbudun, 2000, p. 30).

[32] The head of the CHP, İnönü, expressed his frustration of the vote loss to Rustow in 1954 as follows: "I never expected to see so much ingratitude" (original in Turkish: "*Bu kadar nankörlük göreceğimi hiç bilmezdim*") (quoted in Rustow, 1991, pp. 22–23).

Figure 4. Parties and independent MPs entered the Turkish Grand Assembly (between 1920 and 2011)

	General elections	**Number of parties in elections (Number of parties made it to the parliament)**	**Political parties* in the Parliament, independents**	**Turnout (%)**	**Threshold**	**Represented votes (%)**
0.	*1920*		It had distinguished characteristics, both in terms of the composition of its members, as well as its working conditions and the free debates it hosted – so much so that the assertion that this assembly has been the most democratic and participatory assembly until 1950 (Koçak, 2005, pp. 17-18).	-	-	-
1.	*1923*	1 (1)	HF[33] independent candidates featured on the CHP list	60[34]	-	100
2.	*1927*	1 (1)	CHF few people did stand as 'independent' candidates, outside of this official list of candidates, these people did not succeed in being elected (Koçak, 2005; Tunçay, 1999; Uyar, 1999, p. 25).	23[35]	-	100
3.	*1931*	1 (1)	CHF	45[36]	-	100
4.	*1935*	1 (1)	CHP, 27 independents (Koçak 2005: 16 says 13 independents)	68.5	-	
5.	*1939*	1 (1)	CHP, sixteen independent candidates were able to sit in Parliament[37]	78.6	-	
6.	*1943*[38]	1 (1)	CHP, sixteen independent candidates were able to sit in Parliament	80	n/a	
7.	*1946*	3 (2)	CHP, DP, 6 independents	n/a [39]	n/a	

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[33] HF had a name change, first to CHF then to CHP.

[34] Frey (1965, p. 164).

[35] Koçak (2005, p. 15).

[36] Koçak (2005, p. 15).

[37] Koçak (2005, p. 17).

[38] "At the 1943 elections, the CHP nominated more candidates than the number of MPs to be elected from a certain constituency, and thus provided a means for these candidates to compete for" (Koçak, 2005, pp. 16-17).

[39] Due to the shady election practices the reliable data is yet to be accessible.

8.	*1950*	7 (3)	DP, CHP, Millet P., 1 independent[40]	88.9	n/a	100
9.	*1954*	5 (3)	DP, CHP, CMP, 2 independents[41]	88.6	n/a	99.4
10.	*1957*	5 (4)	DP, CHP, CMP, HP	76.6	n/a	99.9
11.	*1961*	4 (4)	CHP, AP, YTP, CKMP	81.4	n/a	99.1
12.	*1965*	6 (6)	AP, CHP, MP, YTP, TIP, CKMP, 1 independent	71.3	n/a	100
13.	*1969*	8 (8)	AP, CHP, CGP, 13 independents,[42] BP,[43] MP, YTP, TIP, MHP	64.3	n/a	100
14.	*1973*	8 (7)	CHP, AP, MSP, DP, CGP, MHP, 6 independents,[44] TBP	66.8	n/a	99.4
15.	*1977*	8 (6)	CHP, AP, MSP, MHP, CGP, 4 independents,[45] DP	72.4	n/a	99.4
16.	*1983*	3 (3)	ANAP, Populist Party,[46] MDP	76.6	10 %	98.93
17.	*1987*	7 (4)	ANAP, SHP, DYP	93.3	10 % and Regional	80.2
18.	*1991*	6 (5)	DYP, ANAP, SHP, RP, DSP	83.9	10 % and Regional	99.4
19.	*1995*	12 (5)	RP, DP, ANAP, DSP, CHP	85.2	10 %	85.5
20.	*1999*	20 (5)	DSP, MHP, FP, ANAP, DYP, 3 independents[47]	87.1	10 %	81.7
21.	*2002*	18 (2)	AKP, CHP, 8 independents	79.1	10 %	54.7
22.	*2007*	14 (3)	AKP, CHP, MHP, 26 independents	84.2	10 %	87.0

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[40] From Mardin (1).

[41] From Bingöl (1) and Muş (1).

[42] From Adıyaman (1), Bingöl (1), Diyarbakır (1), Elazığ (1), Hatay (1), Mardin (2), Muş (1) and Van (1).

[43] Unity Party of Turkey (Turkish: *Türkiye Birlik Partisi*, TBP; until 1973 *Birlik Partisi*, BP) had its roots among the Alevi population in Turkey. It gained seats in the Turkish Parliament in the parliamentary elections of 1969 and 1973. Its successor was the Peace Party (Turkish: *Barış Partisi*) between 1996 and 1999; was a splinter party from the CHP.

[44] Bitlis (1), Erzurum (1), Mardin (1), Muş (1) and Siirt (1).

[45] Diyarbakır (1), Elazığ (1), Mardin (1) and Siirt (1).

[46] Turkish: *Halkçı Parti*

[47] From Elazığ (1) and Tunceli (1).

23.	*2011*	27 (3)	AKP, CHP, MHP, 35 independents	83.2	10 %	95.4
24.	*J 2015*	21 (4)	AKP, CHP, MHP, HDP	83.9	10%	95.0
25.	*N 2015*	18 (4)	AKP, CHP, MHP, HDP	85.2	10%	97.4
26.	*2018*	8 (4)	AKP, CHP, HDP, MHP	86.2	10%	88.0

*The political parties are listed in order by their seat share in the parliament (from the largest to the smallest).
Sources: Compiled by author using YSK (2011, 2020)

The DP did not wait too long after coming to power until it started using its legislative capacity to secure and stabilise its position as the new incumbent party. As mentioned above, the FPTP electoral system perfectly fit the "arbitrary authoritarian tendencies of the late Menderes regime" (Rustow, 1991, p. 20) by gaining more than the majority or even plurality of the popular vote yet securing 70-92 percent of the parliamentary seats. Right after the second election victory, the changes to a more authoritarian form of governing started to take shape, and with the help of the representation model resembling the one used in the United States for the electoral college, "the party system transformed into a 'hegemonic party system' in the next three years" after 1954 (Arslantaş, 2019, p. 57). As a result, the post-1954 elections became the beginning of the first political polarisation that had direct practical effects, both from the DP side in the shape of the law and from the opposition side in the shape of forming another party (Rustow, 1991, p. 18).

Turning down the voice of the opposition followed more than a few paths, some of which were temporary while others had an influence that is still felt to this day. One of the first actions to suppress the voice of the opposition after the DP's landslide victory in the 1954 elections was, gerrymandering, changing the administrative borders of some districts: for instance, Kırşehir was downgraded to province, while the Malatya city borders were changed. The DP divided the opposition party favouring districts' votes and ensured a possible seat loss for the following elections (Osmanbaşoğlu, 2021).

Another DP strategy to reduce the opposition parties' ability to perform their functions was introducing changes in the legislation. The DP altered both the Standing Order of the parliament and the laws pertaining to parties and elections by the Investigation Committee (Turkish: *Tahkikat Komisyonu*) (Hale, 2013, p. 106). "As regards the Standing Order, the changes included easing the conditions for removing the immunity of the deputies and the introduction of heavier penalties" (Turan, 2015, p. 90; see also Eroğul, 1998, pp. 156–157). A number of laws were also changed in 1954 to favour the ruling party or to render the opposition less effective, which generated temporary yet severe damage to the opposition. The Investigation Committee's measures against the opposition, including the tightening of the Press Law and ban on the use of state radio despite the ruling DP, still could seem to have the most negative effects (Sarıbay, 1991, p. 126). State radio was then the only technological means of communication for the

parties to reach their sympathisers, and it was banned for the opposition parties during the electoral campaigns.[48] Political meetings and demonstrations were forbidden except during election campaigns. Party coalitions were forbidden, and opposition parties were prohibited from mounting mixed lists at elections (Özbudun, 2000, p. 30). Furthermore, restrictions regarding MPs' free movement between the parties or establishing another party were put in force (Sarıbay, 1991, p. 126).

Following the DP's oppressive actions, some of which are mentioned above, intra-party conflicts became more vocalised. This situation gave birth to a new party, the Liberty Party (Turkish: *Hürriyet Partisi*, HP), formed by the former relatively liberal DP members. The HP aimed to gather all other opposition parties under one roof (Karpat, 1961). The creation of the HP was an important signifier that the oppressive regime the DP was creating was not necessarily backed up by every DP member. Despite losing some of its supporters to opposition parties, the DP became the incumbent party once more in the 1957 General Elections by managing to get 48.6 percent of the votes and a super-majority in the parliament with the help of the FPTP system.[49] The CHP was again the second party, having increased its vote share to 41.4 percent, followed by the CMP with 6.5 percent of the votes, and the HP emerged as the fourth party, achieving 3.5 percent of the total cast ballots from its first election.

Nevertheless, the rapid adverse changes in the economy, in combination with the systemic corruption and unjust ruling of the DP, turned the party into an authoritarian one that could not tolerate opponents (Sarıbay, 1991, p. 129). "This drift brought about social mobilization within the opposition, especially in the form of student revolts" (Sayarı, 2008, p. 406). When secular intellectuals and the bureaucracy backed this, it laid the groundwork for the military intervention

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[48] "The government had access to the radio and could therefore use it to reach audiences for campaign purposes. The radio, a state monopoly with only two national stations at the time, constituted a major means of news distribution and communication in a country where systems of communication and transportation were little developed" (Turan, 2015, p. 90).

[49] Despite DP organized 1955 Istanbul Pogrom (or the Events of 6-7 September) which targeted non-Muslim minorities, mainly the Greek-Orthodox community of Istanbul (known as the Rums) and caused tens of people to die and leave hundereds injured (the exact numbers are yet to be known), the minorities still voted for the ruling DP in 1957 because they were afraid of the CHP as it was seen because it was seen as the continuity of the Young Turks.

in 1960 (Cizre-Sakallıoğlu, 1997, p. 154; Landau, 1991, p. 205).[50] After the coup, the army dissolved the DP (Arslantaş, 2019, pp. 56–57).

In the aftermath of the coup d'état in May 1960, radical democratic legislative changes were introduced in the political party law. Yet history shows that most of these changes failed to actualise in practice and were later withdrawn with the 1980 Coup. Therefore, from this point on in this section, to serve the purpose of the thesis, I will highlight the evolution of the party laws and their significance concerning this study.

As was briefly mentioned above, although the CHF was one of the central pillars of the newly built Republic of Turkey, it took four decades and three constitutions[51] for the Turkish parliament to mention political parties in the Constitution in 1961, which was brought by the Constituent Assembly of Turkey (Turkish: *TBMM 1961 Kurucu Meclisi*).[52]

The statement on political parties in the 1961 Constitution indicated that "[p]olitical parties are indispensable elements of the democratic political system."[53] Until the inclusion of this passage in the constitution, how the political parties' function differed from associations was regulated with Article 70 of the 1924 Constitution. This article was as follows: "[i]nviolability of person; freedom of conscience, of thought, of speech, of the press; freedom of travel and of contract; freedom of labor; freedom of private property; of assembly; of association freedom of incorporation, are among the natural rights of Turks" (Section V: Public Law of the Turks: Article no. 70).[54] This passage was not written for the new Turkish nation. The revised version of the regulation in the Association Law (Turkish: *Cemiyetler Hukuku*) of the Ottoman Empire's 1909 Constitution had its first form in the 1876 Constitution, which started the First Constitutional Era (Turkish: *Birinci Meşrutiyet Devri*) of the Ottoman Empire. This situation itself solely signifies two critical points:

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[50] See Eroğul (1998) and Ahmad (1993, chapters 6–7) for more on the Democrat Party era and the 1960 Coup.

[51] 1921, 1924, and 1961 Constitutions.

[52] The Constituent Assembly (existing from January 6, 1961, to October 24, 1961) was established by the military rule of the 1960 coup d'état; half was appointed by the military junta and the rest were elected. One of its major duties was to generate a new constitution and electoral law.

[53] Original phrase (in Turkish): "*Siyasi partiler demokratik hayatın vazgeçilmezidirler.*"

[54] For the full texts of the regulations, see Erdem (1982).

(1) The undeniable connection between the political party approach of the Ottoman Empire and Turkey; (2) Until the 1961 Turkish constitution, the political parties were tied to legislation that was not directly regulating the political party formation but associations.

The first political parties of the new republic faced bans relying on Article 70, which in theory had not much to do with political parties but was somewhat concerned with associations and therefore was more restrictive. For example, Turkey's first opposition party, the centre-right Progressive Republican Party (Turkish: *Terakkiperver Cumhuriyet Fırkası*),[55] was banned by the Deputy Assembly[56] in 1925, 11 months after its foundation.

Even though political parties started getting more attention in the legislation from 1961 on, the law itself and the subsequent amendments have been under several critiques for not securing/protecting the ideological freedom of the parties. This, in practice, was not necessarily different to the previous law in force from 1924. With this situation of having no adequate constitutional checks and balances, when it collided with the existence of a powerful army, the military coups of Turkey (in 1960, 1971, and 1980) seemed to be the autocratic checking mechanism that controlled and shaped political parties rather than leaving it to the hands of the citizens and their electoral power (Heper, 1991, p. 5).

The multi-party parliamentary regime, despite providing the primary ground for the principle of 'to elect and to be elected' in practice, did not enable the same freedom in legal codes and accordingly remained firm with its deficiencies for almost another two decades until the 1961 Constitution,[57] where, for the first time, the Turkish constitution recognised political parties as critical elements of democracy (which is repeated in the 1982 Constitution). Nevertheless, acknowledging the party as a critical entity in democratisation did not necessarily help the Turkish democracy-building process develop towards a more democratic one – the 1961

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[55] It was founded by Kazım Karabekir, who was a reputable army general during the Turkish War of Independence and a prominent politician following the foundation of the Republic of Turkey.

[56] With the changes in the Law on Political Parties in 1965, the Deputy Assembly did not have the direct authority to decide the party's destiny. This new amendment was not only the part of the new law called Law on Political Parties, but also gave the authority to have a say on political parties to the Constitutional Court.

[57] The 1961 Constitution not only introduced the Political Parties Act for the first time but also offered a fair and proportionate representation model via the changes made to the electoral law, which is called the d'Hondt system. D'Hondt will be thoroughly examined in Section 2.

Constitution faced several amendments. However, until 1995,[58] there were not enough advancements that would make it more difficult to ban parties. As a result, the Turkish parliament from 1960 to 1980 witnessed 20 government reshuffles and three military interventions (May 27, 1960; March 12, 1971; and September 12, 1980). These military interventions have taken place on account of either the party elites not meeting the expectations and/or being "engaged in continuous strife" (Heper, 1991, p. 5), or the parties not pursuing the best for the country, which was also defined by the military itself. Within this period, at least 10 parties were shut down, and the party elites were pushed away; the small parties and their elites were no exception.

1.2. Party membership and non-inclusivity of party politics

The symbolic democracy of the early years of the Republic of Turkey can also be traced through how the parties made use of the 'party membership' concept. Despite the high membership numbers, the political representation of marginalised groups was either disguised or not included at all. This situation gives us inaccurate clues about democracy-building in the early decades of the Republic.

In the earlier years of the political party experiences of the new Republic, party membership was put forward as the most important indicator of the political parties' strength.[59] Here, however, the main aim that I want to reach with the party membership concept is to show that Turkish society as a whole moved from having no democratic experience to having one, and people were also pushed from having no ideological belonging to being in a position to identify themselves ideologically, yet all this happened largely independently of the society's consent, occurring instead as the pieces of a causal process. Therefore, in this section, I will emphasise the sceptical legitimacy and the validity of party membership and the representation of minority groups. These points are essentially critical for building on in the following parts of the thesis, where I will recall more than few times how the 'democracy' understanding of Turkey has been heavily

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[58] See Sevinç (1997) on the 1995 elections.

[59] For similar outcome in other geographical contexts see van Haute and Gauja (2015) and Meléndez and Umpierrez de Reguero (2021).

influenced by the early Kemalist period (1923–1938), which "established an authoritarian political order that was heavily indebted to experiences made in the late Ottoman period and managed diversity qua interdiction" (Dressler, 2015, p. 9). And therefore, the democracy concept has evolved through this causal mechanism into something that is not democratic in the Western sense but has become innate to the Turkish population in Turkey or migrated from Turkey.

The Republican People's Party, the first actor of the single-party rule until 1946, in the first decade of its establishment, pursued an approach in which "endorsement by 'the party' became a condition for becoming an electoral candidate" (Türsan, 2004, p. 38). This was followed by "a widespread membership registrations campaign administrated by the village level party branches" (Türsan, 2004, p. 38). The efforts to gain mass membership resulted in 800,000 members, consisting of 5 percent of the general population in 1930, within less than a decade after its establishment. Kemalists incorporated Turkish youth below the voting age as natural members of the Republican People's Party, which would also be interpreted as a strategy used by CHP in evolving into a mass party (Schuler, 2002, p. 43; Türsan, 2004, p. 38). In 1936, the CHP managed to increase its member number by half and reach over 1.2 million members, which was 7.7 percent of the total population (Tunçay, 1984, p. 2024). Therefore, it was not surprising that the party members increased steadily, reaching almost 2 million (9.5 percent of the population) in 1948. The unexpected point, however, was that the one-year-old Democrat Party quickly gained popularity "with masses and successfully established branches" (Sarıbay, 1991, p. 121) and reached 1 million members in 1947 despite the CHP's manipulation of the numbers by including minors in their statistics (Öz, 1992, p. 182; Schuler, 2002, p. 52).

Contrary to membership growth, while the Republican People's Party administration of the 1930s was completely supportive of rapid growth, they were also unwilling to include the whole nation in their organisation. Despite the membership registration campaigns that the CHP held widely in pursuit of being a mass party, this attempt was still restricted. The administrative body had a precise idea of who should become a member and who should not, because they believed the threat against Kemalist reforms was likely to develop from receiving uncontrolled membership from all parts of the society (Schuler, 2002, p. 47).

The Turkish political parties within the nation had no strong direct ties to the identity communities. In other words, although the traditional Turkish political parties had members before and through their formation that included ethnic and religious minorities who are not Sunni and Turks, these members belonging to minority groups were not given any descriptive representation[60] and as a matter of fact, these members were discouraged from showing their minority identity affiliations publicly (Çarkoğlu, 2005; Grigoriadis, 2006). The CHP's efforts in gaining the young population as party members would ensure the CHP as the centre of power and indoctrinate the Kemalist ideology as the prominent one (Karpat, 1991, p. 55).

In the wake of the emergent party politics of the era, the Alevi community[61] was increasingly modelled and interpreted as a distinct and homogeneous political community, not only from the official view of the political parties that sought their support but also within the community that sought representation by aligning with political parties. Regarding this, while Alevis were supported to become members yet were not given their self-defined identities to present themselves as the representatives of that identity, the Kemalists remained distant to Alevi identity in the form of a politically representative concept (Bozarslan, 2003).

The "Law on Administration of the Tunceli Province", passed in 1935 specifically to "pacify the Dersim region, one of the main Alevi Kurdish heartlands" (Güneş, 2020, p. 77), signifies the above-stated argument. "This law combined with the 'Resettlement Law' of 1934, enabled the state to intensify its efforts to Turkify Dersim and culminated in the massacre of Alevi Kurds in 1937–8" (Güneş, 2020, p. 77), showing that the Kemalist member enlargement via the Alevis was directed through a Turkish nationalism that indirectly and clearly reflected the period between 1936 and 1941 in which, while the Republican People's Party supported Alevi partisanship (Yener-Roderburg, 2014), it did not hesitate to eliminate the oppositional Alevi voices.

In light of this example, the CHF's reluctance in enlarging its party members to southeastern Turkey where the Kurds were (and still are) more populated was also no coincidence (see Map

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[60] On the concept of 'descriptive representation', see Pitkin (1967).

[61] Religious minority groups and ethnic minority groups of Turkey (i.e., Alevis and Kurds) that are relevant to this research will be discussed in Chapter II.

1). The CHP was organised in 50 of the 62 provinces excluding the Kurdish-majority cities in the southeastern cities of Turkey; Ağrı, Bingöl, Bitlis, Diyarbakır, Elazığ, Hakkari, Mardin, Muş, Siirt, Tunceli, and Van (Tunçay, 1984, p. 224). This strategy was a conscious deferment rather than calculated for the sake of the votes that CHP would not be getting from that region. In their politics of membership enlargement in southeastern Turkey, the CHP stayed away from the Kurdish-majority districts (Schuler, 2002, pp. 48–50). Rejection of membership in the CHP was widespread particularly among the Kurdish Alevis as it led to the Dersim massacre, but also among the Sunni Kurds in the region as the Kemalists displayed heavy disapproval of the Kurdish rebellions (Schuler, 2002, pp. 50–51; Van Bruinessen, 2013, pp. 33, 70, 103; Zürcher, 2004, pp. 254–255).

Despite the intentional exclusion of the specific ethnic minority groups that demanded recognition and descriptive representation, which specifically accumulate in some areas of Turkey, the degree of organisation in the CHF in 1948 was very high with respect to recruiting members. This situation, in return, unsurprisingly resulted in 6.5 million registered party members in 1943 (Öz, 1992, p. 182), which excluded other minority populations. Furthermore, during the 1950s, the politics of Turkey were shaped in the midst of the partisanship-strengthening policies of the political parties, which, in time with the existing fragmented society, turned into polarising policies. Therefore, although with the number of members of the Republican People's Party in mind as the reflection of the strong Kemalist basis at the public level, the particular interest of the Kemalists in the Alevis is what ultimately underlined the Alevi support of Kemalism; nevertheless, as was stated earlier, it would be a bold claim to think about collective backing of the Alevi population for the CHP.

Considering the Democrat Party's viewpoint in expanding their party members, we can observe a similar reluctant approach from the administration of the Republican People's Party's towards the minority groups. The Alevis were already believed to be widely supporting the CHP, and the DP did not approach the Kurdish populace for the same reasons as the Kemalists (Schuler, 2002, pp. 52–53). It is important to underline once more that the Democrat Party was born from the womb of the Republican People's Party, and especially in its first years, it followed an ideologically parallel line to that of the Republican People's Party with regards to party-strengthening strategies (Schuler, 2002, p. 53), as well as the non-racialised legacy and the

expectation of prioritising unquestioned Turkishness; thus, non-descriptive representation has become the building blocks of the Turkish political party understanding. Thus, it was neither surprising nor interesting when the Democrat Party diverted its angle to a more religious stance[62] and started making use of it (Göçek, 2011, p. 26) so as to emerge as the broad populist party that aimed to be critical of the Republican state's grasp of a solid homogenised social identity in a short time (Hiç, 2009, p. 17; Özbudun, 2003, p. 78).

Furthermore, the high numbers of registered party members of both major parties proportionate to the country's total population highlighted the polarised political stances of Turkish society (Schuler, 2002, p. 53). This polarisation has also shown a certain level of factionalism in the country, which had started blighting Anatolia from the start of the multi-party era.

As a result, the rough deduction would be that, by and large, Anatolian geography shaped the supporting group for the Democrat Party and, later on, the other conservative right-wing parties that succeeded it. Most of the votes for the DP came from the inner cities of Turkey (Anatolia), whereas the western coast of Turkey became the safe area of the CHP, as it remains to this day (Akarca, 2010, p. 19). Reading this situation from another perspective would note that when coastal Turkey was seen as the safe haven of the CHP, in view of propaganda strategies, it fell on Anatolia to support the DP by the Democrat leadership. In other words, not only did the Democrat Party have the opportunity to get ready votes due to factionalism, but also factionalism in the country underlined the existence of heterogeneous social opposition to the CHP (Hiç, 2009, pp. 16–17; Özbudun, 2003, p. 78). But these efforts, as part of the party politics of this period, were concentrated to specific geography which, as seen above, systematically left southeastern Turkey out of sight. As I will start scrutinising in the following sections, this situation expectedly gave rise to ethnic parties in the southeast region that are still in effect (Akarca, 2010).

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[62] The DP's first legislative measures in relation to religion included but were not limited to restoring the call to prayer from the minaret from Turkish to its authentic Arabic (Rustow, 1991, p. 17; Sarıbay, 1991, p. 128), "establishing prayer leaders' and preachers' seminaries (Turkish: *İmam Hatip Okulları*), increasing the budget of the Presidency of the Religious Affairs (Turkish: *Diyanet*) and building over 15,000 new mosques within a decade" (Sarıbay, 1991, p. 128).

1.3. Under-representation is political

Early accounts of the elections of Turkey do not necessarily give us data that we can translate to comprehend how politically under-represented or disproportionate they were. Yet there is a rich scholarship that has put remarkable stress on the Turkish elections' representation in relation to their disproportionate representation in single legislative periods (McCoy & Somer, 2019; Ozen & Kalkan, 2017), the issue of unfair representation and fairness (Esen & Gümüşçü, 2016; Öniş 2015), and represented votes in the parliament of specific ethnic or religious groups (Güneş, 2020). Despite the lack of accounts on under-representation, the electoral history of Turkey provides plenty of exemplar cases that present that under-representation was never an issue of a single period or a single group, nor is it reflected in the represented votes. It is a deep-seated attribute of Turkish political culture and seen as a pattern of Turkish electoral history that the group in power under the influence of army, brotherhoods and businesspeople, either a political party or the coup implementing agencies, systematically imposes certain groups to be under-represented or not represented at all, either via legislation or due course of the ruling power, or the specific groups' rejection of the state agencies in power, or multiple reasons at the same time. Therefore, one cannot possibly reduce under-representation to a single electoral period, a single group, or more importantly, to a single cause; rather, it must be seen as the political culture.

The legislation, as is mentioned above, was not necessarily posing any clear challenge to oppositional voices until the 1983 Constitution. Nevertheless, other parameters were effective enough to manipulate the extent of the political representation by manipulating law enforcement to work in their favour. This section consists of two brief but significant parts to unpack the political under-representation in Turkey by particularly emphasising the period from the early republican era to before the 1980 Coup. The first point is the under-representation of contradicting voices in the parliament, which reveals how the party ban is used to serve its purpose. And the second one is the hand-picked parliamentarians with high profiles. The selection of regime-supporting, high-profile individuals did not reflect the society's every layer; thus, independent of the minority background of some of these MPs, a large proportion of the society remained under-represented.

Although this section emphasises an apparent under-representation of a population in the country, it also benefits from the previous parts. Therefore, this section may appear as a continuation and have some contextual overlapping with these earlier parts of the thesis. Nevertheless, interruptions in the chronological continuation should be expected, since the aim is to focus on the critical concepts of political representation, which would also necessitate the previously mentioned concepts. The two points that will be raised would show that neither of the two points had any legal basis but were somewhat arbitrary treatments of the power holders by using the law enforcement authorities regarding political representation and the individuals who would like to be representatives. This framing justifies the time limitation of this part by the 1982 Constitution, which brought out a legal restriction on representation and created another dimension of this issue.

The ban of Turkey's first opposition party, the centre-right Progressive Republican Party (Turkish: *Terakkiperver Cumhuriyet Fırkası*) is not only a good example but also the first one that illustrates how this new country was, from its early days on, intolerant to different voices (Ahmad, 1991).[63] But there is something else that is very peculiar about this party's ban. The Kurdish nationalist rebellion, known as the Sheik Said Rebellion of 1925, was used as an excuse, despite having no proven evidence, because the Party was involved in the riot and therefore was soon closed under a government decree. In other words, the authoritarian rule of Mustafa Kemal and the ruling CHF hit two birds with one stone: (1) The unwanted Kurdish rebellion was promoting the Islamic caliphate; (2) The strengthening opposition party consisted of reputable army generals (e.g., Kazım Karabekir). Therefore, combining these events, chronologically overlapping yet composed of different political actors, to eliminate at once is an essential indicator of the capacity of today's governing parties, which had their role models starting from the first political party of the early days of the Republic, the CHF.

From the first election held in 1923 to the election of 1977 (the last to occur before the Coup of September 12, 1980), 15 general elections took place in Turkey. Within this period, over 20 legal

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[63] Sitting in parliament also did not always mean that the MPs had freedom of speech. The absence of the right to express themselves practically also disqualifies the MPs' representative role and makes no difference whether they are sitting in the parliament or not. See Koçak (2005) for more on freedom of speech during the early republican era.

political parties were shut down.[64] Some of these parties' elites were also arrested and banned from being politically active for a certain period. Given the ideological standpoints of these parties, it is hard to make any deduction regarding which ones were less favoured. The banned parties ranged from extreme right to extreme left, neither of which has marginally more parties. Some of these parties have successor parties that are active even to this day. For example, the People's Liberation Party (Turkish: *Halkın Kurtuluş Partisi*, HKP), active since 2005, sees itself as the successor of the first communist parties of Turkey, which was banned in the early republican as well as the multi-party era, the Turkish Workers and Peasants Socialist Party (Turkish: *Türkiye İşçi ve Çiftçi Sosyalist Fırkası*) in 1919, and the Homeland Party (Turkish: *Vatan Partisi*) in 1957.

Although the reason for banning the parties was always connected to the parties' political orientation, this was not the sole reason behind the party bans. Three highly connected reasons appear as the prominent ones:

(1) Challenger parties: This constitutes the most important reason concerning party bans. Some parties appeared as strong opposition voices that could shake the parliament majority of the party in power. As a result, independent of the reasons' validity or reliability, these parties were banned from the political scene with the direct or indirect initiation of the ruling party. As was briefly mentioned above, the Progressive Republican Party constitutes an important example for this category. In this case, it is not possible to claim a significant ideological contradiction between this party and Mustafa Kemal's ruling party, the CHF. Still, this party was clearly an important alternative for the oppositional power and appeared as a significant challenger of the CHF (Ahmad, 1991, pp. 72–74). In other words, the arbitrariness of the power holders in their treatments that were implemented on the challenger parties was an apparent significant reason to shut these parties down.

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[64] The exact number of banned parties is not possible to obtain. The archives, including the Turkish Constitutional Court and the Turkish Court of Cassation, have failed to give clear information on the issue and at times contradict each other. The reason behind these unclear numbers cannot be solely read as the effort to hide the actual numbers but could also stem from the disconnection between the Constitutional Court of Turkey and the military courts in relation to the decisions they made and the records they kept. Therefore, I prefer not to state any specific number, and the information I use in this thesis comes from a combination of primary sources, like the ones previously mentioned, and secondary sources such as Hüseyin Aykol's (2009) book on the banned political parties in Turkey.

(2) Ideological reasons: This reason, to a great extent, overlaps with the first reason. At least nine political parties that were getting louder in the Turkish political scene on account of their ideological stances were shut down before the 1980 Coup. During the single-party era of the CHP, there were a number of different political parties from various political orientations. However, openly pro-communist and pro-Islam ones were destined to be shut down (Karpat, 1991, p. 61). At least six of them were closed because of their communist ideological stance (e.g., the above-mentioned predecessors of the HKP).[65] There are, on the other hand, at least three extreme right-wing parties that were shut down on the grounds of promoting Islam and politicising religion (e.g., Islamic Protection Party [Turkish: *İslam Koruma Partisi*]) (Rustow, 1991, p. 17). Nevertheless, as mentioned earlier, other parties were banned simply because they were gaining power against the incumbent.

(3) Organisational reasons: Until 1965, Turkish political parties did not have to have their headquarters in Ankara (Law on Political Parties, Article 8 necessitates it) but could be based anywhere in Turkey. Therefore, some parties did not aim to be in the parliament in the first place or were limited in their reach. Accordingly, they were considered too small and disorganised, and hence, with a court decision, they were shut down. The Small Party (Turkish: *Ufak Parti*), to illustrate, was one of the many which closed due to this third reason.

The second point of political under-representation is the selection of high-profile figures as MPs. Shortly after the DP managed to get a share in the parliament in the 1946 election, many other opposition parties were formed. This period signified the actual start of the multi-party regime in Turkey. In the same year, the Election Law of being a member of the parliament was abolished, and then the Law of Electing Deputies was enacted (Haytoğlu, 2017, p. 26). Nevertheless, society's contact with the MPs remained very limited and, most of the time, was weak or nonexistent. The exception would be the CHP candidates' canvassing vote efforts in their constituencies in the 1946 election (Karpat, 1961). Therefore, in practice party members becoming deputies in the parliament did not change much in the factors that determined the parliamentarian profiles. In this respect, three major elements appear as important in the selection of MPs:

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[65] Not only political parties but also unions that were openly supporting the communist parties were shut down – Istanbul Workers Union Associations (Turkish: *İstanbul İşçi Sendikalar Birliği*) and Istanbul Workers Club (Turkish: *İstanbul İşçi Kulübü*) were shut down in 1946 on the grounds of the same accusations.

(**1**) *Cursus honorum***:** In the first decades of the Turkish parliament, the *cursus honorum* was in effect. The MPs constituted the political elite of the period as well as the social and administrative elite (Koçak, 2005, p. 24; Rustow, 1991, p. 14). From time to time, some parliamentarians would quit parliament to become an ambassador or governor, or vice versa (Koçak, 2005, p. 24). This meant the MP was a government employee whose duty was not to promote the society's welfare but to protect 'the continuity of the state' (Turkish: *devletin bekası),* and some of the members were never changed (Koçak, 2005, p. 24). This situation also prohibited MPs from revealing their critiques against the government or casting a vote against the party in the parliament, because this kind of approach seemed against the government itself but not the party (Uyar, 1998). Nevertheless, considering the one-party period, identifying the party with the state is neither unexpected nor unique to the Turkish case, which is to a great extent valid to this day (e.g., Germany and Italy).

(**2**) **Arbitrariness in the MP selection:** As I mentioned in the first point, the MPs were selected among certain groups of people. But this was not necessarily happening within the candidates' knowledge, capacity, or even their wish. Especially in the early decades of the Republic, there were cases of MPs informing themselves about their granted deputyship through newspapers or radios like the rest of the country (Frey, 1965; Koçak, 2005). This arbitrariness is very much linked to the first point that accommodates these MPs as state servants. As a result, it did not make too much of a difference to be appointed either as an ambassador or as an MP. This deputyship, not selected but appointed, included MPs representing regions they had never been to and being re-elected from entirely different regions (Frey, 1965; Koçak, 2005). Another point on the arbitrariness in the parliamentarian selection appears as regime-supporting public celebrities – famous figures including writers, artists, and journalists – were rewarded with parliament seats (Günay, 2005; Koçak, 2005).

(**3**) **Unrepresentative ethnic or religious MPs:** Despite the factionalism mentioned above that disregarded the southeastern regions of Turkey in particular, there were more than a few people repeatedly selected from these and other Anatolian regions as parliamentarians if they had no previous high-level connection to the higher authorities (e.g., high-ranking military officials). However, the selection of high-profile figures for the parliament did not change here, though it worked differently. Only economically and socially influential people from these regions would become MPs. Thus, the leaders of the dominant Kurdish families in the eastern and southeastern

areas, who had positive and close relations with the state's high-ranking authorities, easily secured a long-term seat in the parliament (Dorronsoro, 2005). This worked in the same fashion for MPs with a religious minority background. As representatives of non-Muslim or non-Turkish minorities, these MPs were well known for their loyalty to the leader and the regime. Therefore, these members were limited to influential people who acted "in a manner more 'Turkish' than the Turkish parliamentarians themselves" (Koçak, 2005, p. 27). Therefore, not reflecting the society as a whole, whether they belong to ethnic or religious minorities or not, left the rest of their community under-represented. Even today, when we look at the governing parties' MPs, the parliamentarians selected from these regions appear to have high profiles in their regions; therefore, the tradition of under-representation of the rural population or opposition groups is yet to be changed.

1.4. Concluding remarks

Middle Eastern scholars who focus on Turkey have long been concerned with the ethnicised and sectarianised voting and representation patterns of Kurds, Alevis, or other ethnic and religious minority groups in Turkey (Barkey, 1998; Başlevent et al., 2005). However, as is briefly stated above, the early accounts of Turkish political history show that the parties that had the chance to have a seat at the parliament, even if they had members with minority backgrounds, had no aim to represent these minority groups. In other words, the traditional Turkish political parties had members of ethnic and religious minorities before and through their formation, but these members belonging to minority groups were not given any descriptive representation. As a matter of fact, these members were discouraged from showing their minority identity affiliations publicly and were expected to act like a Turk even more than the Turkish parliamentarians (Çarkoğlu, 2005; Göçek, 2005; Grigoriadis, 2006). Instead, the Turkish political parties were, and still are, built strongly in relation to political ideologies that they grasp (social democrat, conservative right-wing, and nationalist) (Rubin & Heper, 2013).

In this section, I have presented that the combination of the secrecy of the Society of Self-Sacrifice with its ban, followed by the decades-long one-party rule of the Republican People's Party and the unjust ruling of the Democrat Party during the first phase of the multi-party

regime, show critical resemblances to today's party system and illustrate how the rule of law can be utilised in favour of the governing party while oppressing the opposition.

Additionally, with the timeline that I have grasped (until 1961), the absence of a specific law on political parties did not necessarily have the role of facilitating party bans. On the contrary, the authoritarian parties of Turkey (or the ones that became authoritarian after their landslide victories), or the military rule with the law reforms on the electoral system and the party legislation, systematically facilitated the party ban and the electoral success of the small parties.

2. Disproportionate representation and small opposition party challenges

Proportional representation systems are expected to produce the pattern of multi-party competition, unlike the FPTP systems, which typically make a two-party system of competition (Gauja, 2016, p. 128). The Turkish way of multi-party competition practice in relation to the electoral system has also been interrupted for several reasons regarding additional legislative reforms and regulations that have attracted many scholars of electoral studies. In the previous section, we have seen that in the early republican era of Turkey and the early decades of the multi-party era elections, political parties and the members that constituted those parties very much inherited the Ottoman Empire legacy in their functioning.

There is rich literature that specifies that critical moments in Turkish political history have shaped the current party perception and electoral systems that Turkey embraces, with roots as early as the early Republican era (1923–1938) (Ayan-Musil, 2010). Concerning that, Kalaycıoğlu (2002), in his work which was written before the era of the Justice and Development Party (Turkish: *Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi,* AKP), points out the elections of 1946, 1961, and 1983 as "milestones of transition from varieties of authoritarianism to multiparty pluralism" (p. 55). Arslantaş et al. (2020), on the other hand, indicate that the predominant party system of today's Turkey was fuelled due to two general elections, the first being the 1950 general election. With this election, the strong entrance of the Democrat Party to the Turkish parliament marked the end of the single-party rule of Turkey. The second election is a more recent one: the snap election of November 2002. This election showed that 47 percent of the cast ballots were wasted, as the nationwide threshold did not allow all voted parties to find seats in the Turkish

parliament (Arslantaş et al., 2020). Like these two exemplary works precisely pointing out the cornerstones of the grounds for the predominant party perception of today's Turkey, other studies also focus on the evolution of the party system of Turkey to a predominant party system (Arslantaş et al., 2020; Ayan-Musil, 2010, 2015; Çarkoğlu, 2011; Esen & Ciddi, 2011; Gümüşçü, 2013; Müftüler-Baç & Keyman, 2012). Hence, notably scarce literature focuses on how the anti-regime and ruling party opposition responded to this evolving but constant predominant-party-favouring legislation.

To draw a bigger picture of how the domino effect of the continuing law amendments and the new law decisions put in force has led to the contemporary party system of Turkey, which is an authoritarian and predominant-party one that has hindered the electoral entry of the small parties (which are mainly ethnic and regional), a longer time frame will be evaluated. Therefore, in this section, the electoral systems will be scrutinised through selected examples. Nevertheless, in order to serve the purpose of the thesis, attention will be given primarily to the electoral systems and election threshold of the 1982 Constitution, which is merged with the proportional representation model (d'Hondt formula) of the 1961 Constitution. Furthermore, I will address how the combination of these two systems, d'Hondt and threshold, left little to no work for the authoritarian ruling parties to eliminate their challenger parties by impeding their electoral success or disproportionately favouring the seat share in parliament.

Therefore, this section aims to comprehend further the extent of the role of the Turkish electoral and party systems on the political parties' representation in the Turkish Grand Assembly in theory and practice. Particular attention is given to the small opposition parties, some of which are the predecessors of the HDP, the case political party of this study. To serve the aim of the study's research questions, the electoral law changes that have a significant impact on these small opposition parties will be stressed. This attention would shed light on the systematically created environment via legal terms that aimed to eliminate the small minor political parties from securing seats in the Turkish Grand Assembly.

Moreover, these small parties still managed to find their way into the parliament in most legislative periods, if not all. But how do they achieve being in parliament without having electoral success? In order to solve this puzzle, the section will firstly unpack the representation

model that was adopted with the 1961 Constitution, known as the d'Hondt formula, and its implementations in combination with the thresholds[66] that were introduced with the 1982 Constitution, which is the product of the military intervention of September 12, 1980. Secondly, this section will discuss how the revisions applied to this model of representation made the predominant party system systematically the valid one in Turkey. Lastly, keeping the first two points in mind, the legal survivability and adaptation strategies left to small political parties will be detailed and analysed.

2.1. Polishing the predominant party system with the electoral law

The emergence of political parties may seem relatively late in Turkey's territory, as detailed above in the first section of this chapter. However, apart from the United States, the rest of the world did not have a very advanced pattern in terms of grasping a democratic party system. The Ottoman Empire first, then the Turkish Republic, fit the usual fashion of not having actual political parties. Still, other forms of ideological groups and state officials' being equal to the ruling authority were the standard practice. And it took another century for the non-Western world to have today's understanding of political parties (Duverger, 1974, p. 15), which includes the Turkish case as well. Time-wise, it overlaps with the Turkish multi-party era of the mid-1940s. An important case of Turkey, however, started from that point on. While Turkey's contemporaries largely continued making steps towards democratisation, Turkey put a halt to that process beginning in the 1950s. Nevertheless, later in the post–Second World War period, Turkey still had certain resemblances to France, West Germany, and Austria regarding restructurings of democracy through constitutional dictate, especially when the 1961 and 1982 Constitutions are considered (Heper, 1991, p. 4).

A highly significant electoral reform was introduced to Turkish political history with the 1961 Constitution: a representation model known as the d'Hondt system or d'Hondt formula. Since then, except for the 1965 and 1966 elections, the d'Hondt system[67] has been in effect for all

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[66] 'Election threshold' in this study means the minimum level of nationwide vote which a party needs from a legislative election to gain representation in parliament.

[67] The d'Hondt method (also known as the Jefferson method) is a party-list representation system used to allocate seats in parliaments. This procedure was developed by Victor d'Hondt so as to find a solution for the problem

general (parliamentary) elections and by-elections in Turkey. This method has also been applied to general provincial council and municipal council elections since the 1963 elections. The implementation of this system without the threshold was meant to offer a fair way of being represented.[68] Nevertheless, after the September 12, 1980, Coup, the Turkish government did not have direct control over democratisation, which nullified the d'Hondt system.

In the aftermath of the 1980 Coup, General Kenan Evren, the person in charge of the coup, had the rule of authority until the 1983 elections, yet transformed himself into a civilian president without party affiliation. Evren's rule drew its power from the 1982 Constitution that attributed extensive rights to the presidency such as being in a full-fledged executive position and appointing and removing prime ministers and ministers, even members of the Constitutional Court (Heper, 1991, p. 4). Therefore, it was not necessarily unfitting for the already suffocated political environment to face party bans. Under the Evren's rule, political parties based on economic groups, regions, and ethnicities were forbidden, and unions, civil societies, and associations were not exempt from this ban (Öniş & Webb, 1992, p. 9). With these measurements, the army in power aimed to execute the so-called stabilisation, which was ensured with the 1982 Constitution with the Article 67 'fair representation and stability of government'.[69] The constitution also strengthened the power of the president to provide political stability.

As has been pointed out in the previous section, since the Republic was established, number of parties were banned and many did not even have the chance to compete in the elections. But with the 1980 Coup and the years that followed, several parties were banned due to their ideological stances. Today (as of 2022, mid-March), 19 of these parties'[70] predecessors, some of which were

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about remaining vote and undetermined chair. The votes received by the political party lists in an electoral district are divided first by 1 and then 2, 3, 4, 5, and so on, depending on the number of deputies that each electoral district has. However, the independent candidates are not subjected to the d'Hondt system. They would be listed in relation to the number of ballots each independent candidate has.

[68] The d'Hondt representation system is being used by a number of established democracies including but not limited to Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Japan, and the Netherlands.

[69] Original phrase (in Turkish): *"Temsilde adalet ve yönetimde istikrar."*

[70] Author's own calculation. The mainstream parties are the AKP, CHP, HDP, MHP, DP, SP, IYIP, Democracy and Progress Party (Turkish: *Demokrasi ve Atılım Partisi*, DEVA), Future Party (Turkish: *Gelecek Partisi*), Vatan Partisi, Huda Par, HKP, DSP, and DE. The minor parties out of 39 parties are the TKP, EMEP, Revolutionary Socialist

banned more than a few times, are still legally active in the Turkish political scene. Some of these are from the parliament, and others from outside the parliament are still present in Turkish politics. The parties that have active presence validate that these parties were seen as challengers to the power holder, yet the official reasons to ban the parties clustered around the overt promotion of religion or promotion of the Kurdish cultural and political rights and regionalism. In addition to the party ban, oppression, including but not limited to arresting the party elites of these parties whether they were elected MPs or not, has become a common practice.

The Kurdish parties constitute the best examples of how the Turkish political party ban has evolved and changed to be easily implemented. Furthermore, this example shows how, in response, the 'unwanted' voices – which were the Kurds from the 1990s on[71] (see Table 5)[72] – find their ways to re-vocalise themselves depending on the conjuncture. Since the first months of 1990, there have been eight openly Kurdish parties and one pro-Kurdish political party established in Turkey, two of which are still active: the Party for Peace and Democracy (Turkish: *Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi*, BDP) and the HDP. With each banned Kurdish party (five of them), a substitute party was formed, or the party merged (one so far) with the succeeding one (see Table 5). To illustrate, the People's Democracy Party (Turkish: *Halkın Demokrasi Partisi*. HADEP), established in May 1994, was shut down by March 2003. The Democratic People's Party (Turkish: *Demokratik Halk Partisi*, DEHAP), founded in October 2007, is a successor of the HADEP even before the HADEP was banned. The HADEP was under constitutional pressure following its rise, and therefore the DEHAP was formed as a substitute and remained inactive until the HADEP was actually banned in 2003. The DEHAP was sued to be shut down as well; however, instead of waiting to be shut down, the party dissolved itself and re-formed under the name of the Democratic Society Party (Turkish: *Demokratik Toplum Partisi*, DTP) with veteran Kurdish politicians upon their release from prison in 2004 concerning their alleged support for the Kurdistan Workers' Party (Kurdish: *Partiya Karkerên Kurdistanê*, PKK), which is

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Workers' Party (Turkish: *Devrimci Sosyalist İşçi Partisi*, DSİP), Socialist Workers' Party of Turkey (Turkish: *Türkiye Sosyalist İşçi Partisi*, TSİP), and ANAP.

[71] "In 1991, Parliament adopted the Anti-Terror Law primarily for the purpose of combating the PKK. Turkish judicial authorities have interpreted the law broadly to curtail peaceful Kurdish opposition, censor the Kurdish press, suspend political freedoms and ban one pro-Kurdish political party after another since 1993" (Kurban, 2014).

[72] Further and more detailed discussion on Kurdish and pro-Kurdish political parties will take place in Chapter II.

considered a terrorist organisation by Turkey, under the roof of the HADEP (see Table 5). European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR), on the other hand, charged Turkey for banning these Kurdish political parties unlawfully (see Table 5).

Banning parties was not the invention of the Evren era, as this was already a common procedure of the governing parties throughout the Republic of Turkey's history. The new implementation was reproduced with this new constitution, which has only facilitated the party ban. The invention of the Evren era was to establish the so-called stabilisation with Article 33 of the 1982 Constitution, in which the infamous 10 percent national threshold[73] was introduced to the Turkish political history and remains in force to this day.

The double threshold of 1982, first used in the legislative elections of 1983, following the post-coup Evren's rule, fit the purposes of the military intervention perfectly, which briefly included the elimination of the small and regional parties. The justification of the coup was to avoid the coalition parties that were disturbing the country's stability. That is why introducing a threshold as high as 10 percent was a significant indicator to get rid of "the party inflation" (Bahçeci, 2005, p. 370), which also seemed a greater threat to government stability. As a result, at the expense of the proportionate representation model that had been adopted, the d'Hondt formula, the double threshold was introduced by the National Security Council[74] (Turkish: *Milli Güvenlik Kurulu*, MGK) under Article no. 2839, and this law was implemented in the 1987 and 1991 legislative elections only. These double thresholds are (1) national threshold and (2) regional threshold. The first threshold meant that as long as a political party did not get 10 percent of nationwide valid votes, it would not be represented at the Turkish parliament. On the other hand, the second threshold would be a local one and thus "depended on the nature of the electoral district" (Öniş & Webb, 1992, p. 9).[75]

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[73] Turkey's 10 percent is the highest election threshold in the world enforced since 1980. The highest election threshold among European Union countries is 5 percent.

[74] The MGK, created after the 1960 military intervention, was a principal government agency that consisted of military commanders. The military junta in the aftermath of the 1980 military intervention extended the role of this institution with the help of the 1982 Constitution.

[75] "Local thresholds are determined by dividing the total number of votes in the constituency by the total number of seats allocated to the constituency. The local threshold therefore varies, from a minimum of 20 percent in the largest 48 constituencies with six seats each (also in districts with five seats) to a maximum of 50 percent in the

Overall, the d'Hondt formula with the double threshold was a perfect method to prevent the representation of the regional parties in parliament[76] and stabilise the party system. In this way, which is in effect to this day, large parties are over-represented, while the small ones are either under-represented (Arslantaş et al., 2020, p. 1) or only run if they can expect electoral support sufficient to pass the electoral threshold, in other words, not represented at all.

As stated earlier, the democratic rights that were created or given to the Turkish citizens and the political parties were scarce in number and were far from creating a democratic environment, especially concerning the post-1980 period.[77] The 1980 military intervention disabled the limited but existing possibilities that the d'Hondt formula of the 1961 Constitution had offered. With the 1983 constitutional changes, the first government that came to power with the elections right after the military rule[78] was Turgut Özal's Motherland Party (Turkish: *Anavatan Partisi*, ANAP), and the limited reach of the political participation was even more damaged. As mentioned above, the double threshold with d'Hondt, disabling small parties from finding their voice in the parliament, was the first constitutional attack against the opposition voices. The Özal government was not running behind what the military junta brought out, and additionally passed a law that was in effect for the 1987 and 1991 elections providing an extra quota for the electoral district that had more than six MPs for the largest party. Therefore, the apparent unfairness previously generated under the d'Hondt system with the two-threshold system has made the representation vividly more unfair and favoured the ruling/largest party while leaving the smaller ones unheard (see Figures 4 and 5).

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constituencies with only two seats each. Furthermore, in 46 constituencies only one member is elected on the basis of simple majority, which also hinders small parties" (Öniş & Webb, 1992, p. 9).

[76] At least for the 1983 legislative period, we cannot think of the relation between the nationwide threshold and regional parties in respect to the Kurdish movement that was later vibrant in southeastern Turkey. The developments of the 1990s in the Kurdish movement have also proved that the nationwide threshold as a well-functioning legal mechanism so as to block Kurdish political parties that were significantly stronger in the Turkish Kurdistan.

[77] The 1980 Coup caused bans of political parties that were in and out of the parliament in the preceding years, a political (participation) ban on these parties' members for 10 years, or imprisonment of the members.

[78] Sabuncu (2006, p. 193) does not consider the 1983 elections as 'free elections' due to the 'extra special' conditions that were prepared for it.

Table 5. Legally founded pro-Kurdish/Kurdish political parties in Turkey

Political party	Founded in (closed)	Participated elections		If not active anymore, why?	Origin	Ideology	Major points
		Elections	MPs				
People's Labor Party, HEP	07.06.1990 (14.07.1993) Led by Ahmet Fehmi Işıklar, then Ahmet Türk.	Legislative snap election 1991 (alliance with the SHP - MPs in the parliament) 1992 local elections (with the Revolutionist Election Bloc)[79]	22 MPs	Due to the overt promotion of Kurdish cultural and political rights the party was banned by the Constitutional Court in July 1993. * In 2002 the ECtHR granted Feridun Yazar, Ahmet Karataş and Ibrahim Aksoy each €10,000 and another €10,000 combined due to the banning of their party.[80]	Split from the SHP in 1990 as 7 MPs	Left-wing Kurdish nationalist	First one to state itself as Kurdish party. Involved in negotiations with the PKK.
Freedom and Democracy Party, ÖZDEP	19.10.1992 (23.11.1993) Led by Mevlüt İlik.	n/a	n/a	Banned by the constitutional court of Turkey on charges of supporting self-determination and for conducting bureaucratic services in the Kurdish language.[81]	Successor of the HEP * The party was in case the HEP would be banned.	Left-wing Kurdish nationalist	
Democracy Party, DEP	21.06.1991 (16.06.1994) Chairwoman Leyla Zana	n/a	n/a	Banned. * In 2002, the ECtHR held DEP's dissolution to be contrary to Article 11 of the ECtHR (freedom of association) of the European Convention on Human Rights.[82]	Preceded by the HEP and the ÖZDEP *Founded in-case HEP's ban. And when the	Left-wing Kurdish nationalist	The party became divided over the issue of the PKK, and two factions - moderate and radical - appeared. On the 2 March 1994 the Turkish parliament lifted the

[79] Turkish: *Devrimci Seçim Bloku*

[80] Yazar, Karataş, Aksoy and The People's Labour Party (HEP) v. Turkey ECtHR judgment (Applications nos. 22723/93, 22724/93 and 22725/93).

[81] Halliday et al. (2007, p. 237)

[82] Dicle for the Democratic Party (DEP) v. Turkey ECtHR judgment (Application no. 25141/94).

					HEP was closed in 1993, all MPs moved to the DEP.		immunity of the deputies from the DEP and Orhan Doğan and Hatip Dicle were detained.
People's Democracy Party, HADEP	11.05.1994 (13.03.2003) Chairman Murat Bozlak	Legislative elections 1995, 1999 Municipal elections 1999	0	Was banned by the Constitutional Court on 13 March 2003 on the grounds that it allegedly supported the PKK. * In 2010, the party's dissolution was unanimously found by the ECtHR to be contrary to Article 11 (freedom of association) of the European Convention on Human Rights.[83]	Preceded by the DEP	Extreme left-wing Kurdish nationalist	It has decided to distance itself clearly from the PKK.[84] After the ban 46 politicians from the HADEP were banned from politics for 5 years.[85]
Democratic People's Party, DEHAP	24.10.1997 (17.08.2005)	Legislative elections 2002. Municipal elections 2004 (with the SHP)	0	It dissolved itself during the establishment of the SHP that led to the DTP.	Preceded by the HADEP	Extreme left-wing Kurdish nationalist	The last Kurdish party that had the attempt to join in political scene since late 1980's. On the 26 March 2003, 35 Mayors who were part of the HADEP (after its ban), joined the DEHAP.[86]
Democratic Society Party, DTP	09.11.2005 (11.12.2009)	Legislative elections 2007 (with the Thousand Hope Candidates)[87] Municipal elections 2009	22 Ind.s	Constitutional Court of Turkey banned the DTP, ruling that the party has become "focal point of activities against the indivisible unity of the state, the country and the nation". the closure of the latter party for its alleged	Preceded by the DEHAP. The party was founded in 2005, as the merger of the	Left-wing Kurdish nationalist	49th political party that is established in Turkey. The DTH was set up by the veteran Kurdish politicians, former deputies Leyla Zana, Orhan Doğan, Hatip Dicle

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[83] HADEP and Demir v. Turkey ECtHR judgment (Application no. 28003/03).

[84] Rubin and Heper (2013, p. 125).

[85] Boudreaux (2003, March 14).

[86] Bianet (2017, May 3).

[87] Four left-wing political parties in Turkey The alliance contested the election by fielding candidates from participating parties as independents in order to bypass the 10 percent election threshold needed to win seats. the pro-Kurdish DTP, the socialist libertarian ÖDP, EMEP and SDP.

		(9 provincial capitals and mayorship in 54 municipalities)		connections with the PKK. The party was banned by Turkey's Constitutional Court on December 11, 2009. In addition, its co-chairs, Ahmet Türk and Aysel Tuğluk, were stripped of their parliamentary immunity and barred from membership in any political party for five years.	DEHAP and the DTH.		and Selim Sadak upon their release from prison in 2004. The party adopted a gender quota of 40% and the co-chair system on all decision-making party levels, which is adopted by the successor parties. Türk and Tuğluk were elected as the first co-chairs of the party.
Peace and Democracy Party, BDP	03.05.2008 (11.07.2014) founded by Mustafa Ayzit[88]	Municipal elections 2009, 2014	20	At the 3rd Congress of the party on 11 July 2014, the name was changed to the DBP and a new structure restricting activities on the local/regional government level was adopted.[89]	Preceded by the DTP Succeeded by the DBP and the HDP	Left-wing Kurdish nationalist	One-third of its representatives were Alevis.
Peoples' Democratic Party, HDP	15.10.2012	Presidential elections 2014, 2018 Legislative elections 2015, snap 2015, 2018 Municipal elections 2014, 2019	80 (2015, J) 59 (2015, N) 67 [50] (2018)	2021, March 17, the Turkish Prosecutor General sought to prohibit 687 HDP officials from engaging in political activities and applied to the Constitutional Court to have the party banned. Up until now no decision yet to be made by the Turkish courts.	Preceded by the BDP	Left-wing populism Pro-Kurdish, pro-minority	Selahattin Demirtaş and Figen Yüksekdağ both are imprisoned, were elected as the first co-chairs of the party. Current co-chairs of the HDP are Mithat Sancar and Pervin Buldan.
Democratic Regions Party, DBP	11.07.2014 -	The HDP acts as the fraternal party to the DBP, which resulted in reorganisation in a joint structure from 2014 on.	1 (2018)[90]	n/a	Preceded by the BDP	Left-wing Kurdish nationalist regionalist	BDP was assigned exclusively to representatives on the local administration level.

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[88] Cumhuriyet (2009, December 7).

[89] Bianet (2011, October 7).

[90] Saliha Aydeniz was elected HDP MP for the Diyarbakır district in the Legislative Election in June 2018. On the 30 November 2019, Aydeniz dropped her HDP seat and joined the DBP.

Figure 5. Calculations of AKP's election results with, and without 10 percent threshold and d'Hondt (between 2002 and 2018)

Elections	Number of total seats	with 10 % and d'Hondt		without 10 % and d'Hondt	
		%	seats #	%	seats #
2002	550	66.0	363	34.0	188
2007	550	62.0	341	46.0	256
2011	550	59.0	327	49.0	274
2015, June	550	47.0	258	40.0	224
2015, Nov.	550	58.0	317	49.0	272
2018	600	49.0	295	42.0	255

Sources: Compiled by author using YSK (2011, 2020)

Even though the consequences of the Turkish threshold would be high in number, especially when long-term problematics are considered, there are three significant problems that stand out: (1) unrepresented (wasted) votes, (2) disproportionate representation, and (3) avoiding intra-party conflicts with the fear of not being represented.

(1) Under-represented (wasted) votes: In countries in which the electoral systems offer proportional representation, a wasted vote roughly indicates a vote that does not help to elect a candidate, which could be interpreted as a vote being wasted if it is cast either (1) "for a losing candidate", or (2) "for a winning candidate but in excess of what she needed to prevail" (Stephanopoulos & McGhee, 2015, p. 834). However, in the context of Turkish legislative elections, wasted votes usually have the first meaning with a political party unit of measurement due to the 10 percent national threshold and, since 1983, lead to a substantial number of wasted votes that have not been represented in the parliament (see Figure 4).

Surprisingly, the two elections that took place in 1987 and 1991, under the d'Hondt with double threshold method, resulted in respectively three and five parties securing seats in the parliament (see Figure 4). At first sight, the 1980 military intervention seemed to have made the parliament a stage for multi-party representation during these legislative periods. However, this was only a façade. The 1987 elections, where the aftermath of the 1980 Coup pressure was diminished,

proved that the d'Hondt representation with a 10 percent threshold could result in large groups of the voters being unrepresented in the parliament. Seven political parties competed in the 1987 elections, only three of which secured seats at the Turkish parliament, which left almost 20 percent of the cast ballots not represented, in other words, wasted (see Figure 4), especially compared to the pre-threshold legislative election results, where we see a more than 99 percent reflection of the cast votes in the parliament.

The disproportionality of the Turkish representation system is particularly apparent with the parties that have a geographically concentrated voter base.[91] This situation makes the under-representation of small parties that are regionally powerful even more drastic. Nevertheless, it is significant to note that when the national threshold was put into force in the 1980s, this restriction and others were not necessarily targeting the Kurdish political movement but aiming to suppress the small opposition parties. It is a development of the 1990s that the 10 percent threshold also generated the function of blocking Kurdish political parties. The case of the Kurdish-majority provinces[92] of Turkey provides the most visible example of disproportionate representation (see Figures 6 and 7).

Even though the initial reason for the emergence of the threshold did not aim to block the Kurdish parties from the 1990s on, it served this purpose. The 10 percent national threshold had the effect of blocking Kurdish political parties despite the landslide victories these parties were gaining in those regions (see Figures 6 and 7). The 1995 and 1999 legislative elections provide us with critical examples of the proportions of non-representation of voters in the Kurdish-majority provinces. In these two elections, the Kurdish HADEP[93] was the most voted party in 11 electoral districts and got more than 20 percent of the votes in 15 other districts (see Figure 8).

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[91] Recent studies (see Arslantaş, 2020; Ziegfeld, 2013) show that if the parties have a regionally concentrated voter base, a high district magnitude does not necessarily favor smaller parties.

[92] The Kurdish majority provinces are detailed in Chapter II, section 3.2.1.

[93] HADEP was founded in May 1994 and banned in March 2003 on the grounds that it allegedly supported the PKK, which was a successor of the Democracy Party, and was succeeded by the Democratic People's Party (DEHAP).

Figure 6. AKP's vote (%) and seat* shares in the Kurdish-majority provinces

Province	2002		2007		2011		2015 June		2015 Nov.	
	Vote	**Seat**	**Vote**	**Seat**	**Vote**	**Seat**	**Vote**	**Seat**	**Vote**	**Seat**
Ağrı	17.7	3/5	63.0	5/5	47.6	3/4	16.6	0/4	27.7	1/4
Batman	20.6	3/4	46.4	2/4	37.1	2/4	18.8	1/4	29.1	1/4
Bingöl	31.7	3/3	71.1	3/3	67.1	2/3	62.8	2/3	64.3	2/3
Bitlis	17.7	3/4	58.8	3/4	50.7	2/3	31.3	1/3	44.2	1/3
Diyarbakır	16.0	8/10	40.9	6/10	32.1	6/11	14.8	1/11	22.3	2/11
Hakkari	6.8	1/3	33.5	2/3	16.4	0/3	9.7	0/3	13.8	0/3
Iğdır	6.5	0/2	28.9	1/2	28.3	0/2	11.7	0/2	31.7	1/2
Mardin	15.4	3/6	44.1	4/6	32.1	3/6	19.9	1/6	29.3	2/6
Muş	16.9	3/4	38.6	2/4	42.8	2/4	24.8	1/3	34.5	1/3
Siirt	17.5	1/3	48.8	2/3	48.0	2/3	28.7	1/3	37.2	1/3
Şırnak	14.0	2/3	26.9	1/3	20.6	1/4	9.7	0/4	12.3	0/4
Tunceli	6.6	0/2	12.3	0/2	15.7	0/2	11.5	0/2	12.8	0/2
Van	25.8	6/7	53.2	5/7	40.2	4/8	20.0	1/8	30.7	2/8

*Total number of the district seats indicated after "/".

Sources: Compiled by author using YSK (2011, 2020)

Despite these results, the HADEP could not get into the parliament due to not managing to surpass the 10 percent threshold, remaining at around 4 percent of the country total (see Figures 8 and 9). When we look at the 2002 legislative election results, as Figure 7 shows, the AKP, despite getting only 16 percent of the votes cast in Diyarbakır in this election, had 80 percent of the seats in this district (Arslantaş et al., 2020, p. 10).[94]

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[94] To see the disproportional election results of the Kurdish-majority electoral districts between 2002 and 2015, along with the reflection of the system to the parliament seats please see Figure 6.

Figure 7. AKP vs DEHAP (2002) / vs DTP (2007) / vs BDP (2011) / vs HDP (June 2015 & November 2015) vote shares (%) in Kurdish-majority provinces

Province	2002		2007[95]		2011		June 2015		Nov. 2015	
	AKP	DEHAP	AKP	Indp[96]	AKP	Indp[97]	AKP	HDP	AKP	HDP
Ağrı	17.7	35.1	63.0	24.0	47.6	41.0	16.6	78.2	27.7	68.1
Batman	20.6	47.1	46.4	39.1	37.1	51.8	18.8	72.6	29.1	68.2
Bingöl	31.7	22.1	71.1	14.3	67.1	23.9	62.8	40.5	64.3	29.1
Bitlis	17.7	19.6	58.8	21.0	50.7	40.3	31.3	60.4	44.2	49.4
Diyarbakır	16.0	56.1	40.9	47.0	32.1	58.7	14.8	79.1	22.3	72.8
Hakkari	6.8	45.1	33.5	56.0	16.4	79.9	9.7	86.4	13.8	83.7
Iğdır	6.5	32.6	28.9	40.5	28.3	31.4	11.7	55.9	31.7	51.7
Mardin	15.4	39.6	44.1	38.0	32.1	52.1	19.9	73.3	29.3	68.4
Muş	16.9	38.1	38.6	45.0	42.8	44.5	24.8	71.3	34.5	61.8
Siirt	17.5	32.2	48.8	39.0	48.0	42.8	28.7	65.8	37.2	58.3
Şırnak	14.0	45.9	26.9	53.7	20.6	72.7	9.7	85.4	12.3	85.5
Tunceli	6.6.	32.5	12.3	59.9	15.7	22.2	11.5	60.0	12.8	54.8
Van	25.8	40.9	53.2	32.0	40.2	48.7	20.0	74.8	30.7	65.5
TR total	**34.3**	**6.2**	**46.6**	**3.7**	**49.9**	**5.7**	**40.9**	**13.1**	**49.5**	**10.8**

Source: Compiled by author using YSK (2020)

Figure 8. HADEP's electoral performance during the 1995 and 1999 elections

Election	Total votes	Percentage	Seats in the parliament
1995	1.171.623	4,16 %	0/550
1999	1.482.196	4,75 %	0/550

Source: Compiled by author using YSK (2011)

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[95] Güneş Murat Tezcür with his study shows that many DEHAP supporters in the Kurdish-majority-provinces of the 2002 elections switched to the AKP in 2007. However, it is difficult to estimate the magnitude of the voter transitions in that region due to the absence of survey data (2010: 15).

[96] Thousand Hope Candidates (Turkish: *Bin Umut Adayları*): DTP, ÖDP, Socialist Democracy Party, Labour Party. 22 MPs got to the parliament out of 65 Thousand Hope candidates as independents and formed a party. They got 1,334,518 votes.

[97] Labour, Democracy and Freedom Bloc (Turkish: *Emek, Demokrasi ve Özgürlük Bloku*). From this Bloc 36 MPs got into the parliament, the Supreme Electoral Council of Turkey later annulled the election of MP Hatip Dicle in Diyarbakır, reducing the alliance's elected MPs to 35. The Bloc fielded 65 candidates in 41 provinces (Radikal, 2011, April 10).

Figure 9. Pro-Kurdish/Kurdish parties and blocs in the Turkish legislative elections (between 1995 and 2018)
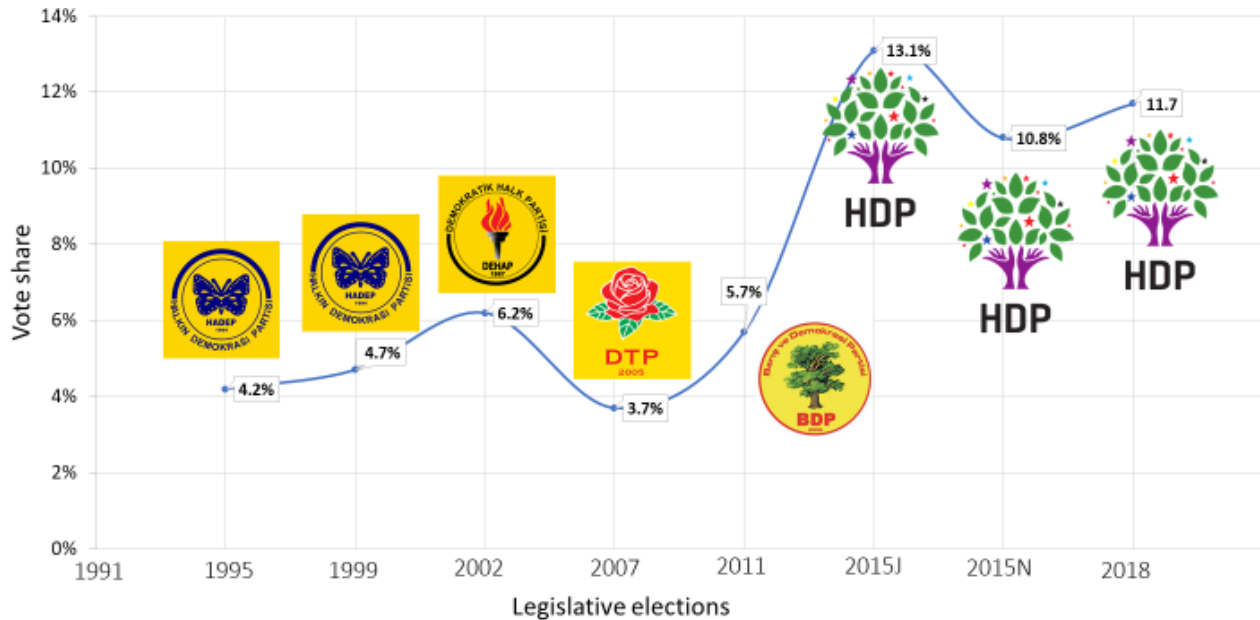
Sources: Compiled by author using YSK (2011, 2020)

This situation forces electorates to have three options, none of which seems optimal: (a) wasting your vote for a party with no hope of bypassing the threshold (see Cox, 1997, p. 13), (b) voting "strategically" for another party that you do not fully support instead of casting a vote for a party with no hope of winning, or (c) abstention (e.g., for the March 2019 municipal elections, around 200,000 Kurds did not vote) (Amerikalı Türk, 2019, May 31).

(2) Disproportionate representation: Disproportionate representation did not emerge with the emergence of the 10 percent threshold. As early as the launch of the multi-party era, disproportionate representation was part of the electoral system, and as stated earlier, the DP benefitted greatly (Rustow, 1991, p. 20). However, the later introduction of d'Hondt with a high threshold marked another level of unfair representation. The favour of d'Hondt with the country-level 10 percent threshold revealed itself most clearly in the 2002 legislative election, which has become an important example for the worldwide relevant literature on election threshold effects (see Figure 5).[98] The election results gave the AKP its first election victory, with 34.28 percent

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[98] See the following link for an example: http://aceproject.org/ace-en/topics/es/esd/esd02/esd02e/esd02e02

of the eligible voters. Other than the AKP, the CHP was the only opposition party, with 19.39 percent of the votes and eight independent MPs in the parliament. However, the problem is not only in the non-representation of the 45.3 percent of the ballots distributed among 16 parties that did not get electoral support due to the 10 percent threshold (see Figure 2). The problem also became visible in the possibilities for disproportionate representation created by the combination of d'Hondt with the 10 percent threshold. As a result, the AKP, despite gathering 34 percent of the voters, got more than two-thirds of the seats in the Turkish parliament (see Figure 5). The CHP also benefitted from the disproportionate representation by acquiring 32 percent of the votes compared to a 19.39 percent vote share.

(3) From intra-party conflicts to not being represented: Even though the infamous 2002 election appears as the most unfair one regarding the proportionality of representation, the overall regulations and the powerful ruling parties do not let small parties flourish or welcome the newly emerging parties out of intra-party conflicts. The political party history of Turkey after 1983 has several examples to this point. A party splits from a bigger party, participates in the election, and does not get electoral success due to the threshold. Another version that is not uncommon in Turkish political party history is when a party breaks away due to intra-party challenges from another party if this party is not the ruling one, which automatically pushes both of these parties into another challenge: bypassing the 10 percent national threshold. Akşener's Good Party (Turkish: *İyi Parti,* IYIP) founded in 2017 after splitting from the Nationalist Movement Party (Turkish: *Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi,* MHP) offers a good example on this point. The first election after the split took place in 2018. It showed that if either of the parties had not been involved in electoral alliances with, respectively, the CHP and the Felicity Party (Turkish: *Saadet Partisi,* SP) under the Nation Alliance (*Millet İttifakı*), and the AKP under the People's Alliance (Turkish: *Cumhur İttifakı*), they would not have passed the national threshold. IYIP collected 9.96 percent of the total votes, while the MHP gathered only 11 percent of the total ballots; in both cases, the stronger allies (the AKP and the CHP) had their share in these parties' vote gain.

Even though not all legislative elections brought out parliamentary sessions that had more than 10 percent of non-represented votes (those that did were 1987, 1995, 1999, 2002, 2007, and 2018), which would be fairly normal for established democracies, we see from this chapter that

in the Turkish case, even the represented parties under certain conditions (such as avoiding intra-party conflicts with the fear of not being represented) do not provide a natural course of results of democratic elections. Rather, they appear as playing with the system to be part of the system, which eventuates in the accumulation of silenced oppositional groups and/or being content with political options that are not one's own, permanently or for a long period.

In light of the points raised above, there is a well-connected transition from the Ottoman Empire to the Republic of Turkey regarding the political party understanding as well as party regulations, despite the means of democratisation that were attempted to be implemented. In spite of the election law and the party law developed over decades, the efforts to stabilise the political and economic conditions of the country by the military junta in the aftermath of the 1980 Coup deformed the representation model, which has become highly disproportionate in representation. Furthermore, the strict regulations systematically generated unfair representation, unfree and unfair elections, and disproportionate representation, which in return led to a predominant party system. The following part of this chapter will focus more on the outcomes of undemocratic legislative changes with the concepts introduced above, with a particular emphasis on the steps resembling external voting.

2.2. Small parties' survivability and adaptation strategies

The law on political parties is not the only means of shaping Turkish political parties and their extensions and reach abroad. This study recognises the changes in national party systems that have an unavoidable effect on how the parties operate, understanding that this situation cannot be understood solely by analysing the changes in law enforcement. There are a number of works that emphasise the role of religion in the changes that have been observed throughout the AKP era (e.g., Eligür, 2010; Hale & Özbudun, 2009; Tuğal, 2009), and some other studies see the changes as neoliberal transformation (e.g., Bozkurt, 2013; Gambetti, 2009; Gümüşçü, 2010; Yeşilada & Rubin, 2013), while some others (see Arslantaş et al., 2020) signify the importance of the electoral system and its direct effect on the creation of the AKP's hegemony over politics today. However, there is significantly scarce literature that focuses on how the regime and ruling party opposition responded to the evolution of the political party systems under under the decades-long authoritarian rules.

Even though there have been 26 Turkish legislative elections since 1923 (see Figure 4) and there is a strong tradition of elections now, it is still hard to talk about a long-lasting period in which the Turkish parliament witnessed multiple parties at the Turkish Grand Assembly. The multi-party eras, as shown above, were interrupted with legislative changes that restricted the political parties with new regulations on the law on political parties, electoral law, or both, mainly by the parties in power and by the MGK aftermath of the coups of 1960, 1971, and 1980.

As stated in Section 1, "Building a Symbolic Democracy in Turkey", under-representation of the marginals particularly was innate to the political system adopted from the late Ottoman period, which neither offered a space for diversity nor tolerated voices contradicting the regime or ruling party. Incumbent parties from Germany to India had a similar trend. Thus, the unheard voices of the opposition were trying to be heard while the ruling ones were systematically suppressing them.

As a result, the tension and violent conflict between the Turks and Kurds were not necessarily surprising when they finally became politically apparent during the 1980s. Therefore, this ethnicised tension has, since the late 1980s, taken the primary focus in elections more than the left-wing/right-wing tensions that were prominent for over two decades from the 1960s to the 1980s. Even though the established parties that were traditional ideology-based parties ensured their presence at the Turkish parliament and competed with one another, the tensions between the Turkish government and the Kurdish political groups show no signs of lessening to this day, which also pushed the shutting down of openly claimed Kurdish parties, or, as in the case of the HDP and its predecessors, the imprisonment of elected MPs.

Widely held stereotypes rooted in, for example, ethnic and religious differences, racial and religious insecurities, and misrecognised groups contribute to the split of the polity, particularly among the pro-hegemon groups, the Sunni Turks, and ethnic/religious minority groups (Kurds and Alevis). Thus, for example, until the start of the 2000s, the armed forces of the Kurds (PKK) were prominent among the Kurds. And until recently, Kurdish and pro-Kurdish political parties acting through their party leaders, party organisers, and campaigners have frequently been granted a central role in the popular and scholarly explanation of mostly ethnicised and vaguely sectarianised divisions.

From 2014 onward, on the other hand, the HDP – pro-Kurdish yet claiming to be 'intercultural' and 'multi-religious', wanting to be part of the political history of this country – for the first time made it possible to overcome the Turkishness-prioritising ethnicised legacy which had been envisioned as required, making it to the Turkish Grand Assembly (Grigoriadis, 2016; Kemahlıoğlu, 2015). On the other hand, the Republican People's Party from the 1920s on, the Democrat Party in the 1960s, the Nationalist Movement Party in the 1990s, and the Justice and Development Party since the 2000s are the most successful and known examples of Turkish parties that did not offer descriptive representation to any of their members besides Turkishness.

In her work scrutinising multi-racial parties' electoral success in Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana, Sara Abraham (2005) identifies the zero-sum political logic that also fits the Turkish political party scene over decades, stating that "if one party wins, the 'race' wins, and, therefore, the other 'race' loses" (p. 118). The Turkish elections have never been a stage for competition between entirely nationalist parties (Turk vs. Kurd). Therefore, it is not possible to talk about a 'winning' case of a Kurdish nationalist party. However, once we replace 'winning' with 'survival' or 'electoral success' regarding the ethnic, multi-ethnic, or multi-sectarian parties, Abraham's approach of zero-sum political logic takes on significance for the case of Turkey as well.

Political parties, such as the AKP since 2002, not only won elections but won in a landslide. And, as stated, that was not the result of proportional representation, but the gift of the electoral system. For example, in the 2002 Turkish general elections, the AKP won 363 out of 550 seats despite getting only 34.3 percent of the total votes (see Figure 5). At the same time, the Kurdish nationalist DEHAP, due to the 10 percent national threshold, had no chance to get any seat in the parliament despite gaining 6.2 percent of the total votes (see Figure 10). [99]

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[99] See the link for the results of the 2002 General Elections of Turkey:
http://electionresources.org/tr/assembly.php?election=2002

Figure 10. DEHAP's electoral performance during the 2002 elections

Election	Total Votes	Percentage	Seats in the parliament
2002	1,933,680	6.2	0/550

Source: Compiled by author using YSK (2011)

Although Turkey's national threshold is the highest in the world at 10 percent, Turkish citizens seem to build their understanding of 'democracy' with the internalisation of this threshold, despite the damage it causes to proportionality. Of course, the nation-building from the early republican era onward around one language (Turkish), one nation (Turkey), one ethnicity (Turkish), and – not as visibly – one belief (Sunni Islam) determined the impossibility of the acceptance or even, to a certain extent, recognition of ethnic or religious minority groups within the political system. Therefore, for these citizens, the Turkish state and its democracy are in harmony with the 10 percent threshold, which keeps the regionally powerful political parties (e.g., Kurdish nationalist or pro-Kurdish political parties) from securing seats at the grand assembly. This is a problem not only for ethnic parties but also for any small or newly emerging parties. Therefore, even though this study focuses on an ethnic party more than the other mainstream parties, the challenges put forward by the electoral law and law on political parties are valid for any non-traditional party and therefore cannot be limited to the ethnic parties, in the case of this study to pro-Kurdish political parties.

This situation since the emergence of the AKP as the incumbent party in 2002 has transformed the Turkish party system into a predominant-party one (Arslantaş et al., 2020; Ayan-Musil, 2015; Çarkoğlu, 2011; Gümüşçü, 2013; Müftüler-Baç & Keyman, 2012). Nonetheless, as the above section underlined, none of the earlier elections provided the most democratic environments, especially for the smaller political parties. On the other hand, the Kurdish nationalist DEHAP, even though it managed to get the votes of 56.1 percent of the Diyarbakir electorates in the 2002 elections, failed to surpass the 10 percent national threshold by gathering only 6.2 percent of the total votes (see Figures 6 and 7). If there were no threshold, DEHAP would have more than 30 seats in the parliament with 1,933,680 valid votes cast in its favour (see Figure 10).

As stated above, the predecessor parties of the HDP and the DBP, as well as many other small and newly emerging parties, had hard times establishing a presence in the Turkish political scene. Before the 1980s, this barrier took the shape of suppressing the oppositional voices, and after the 1980s, it also took the form of deterring electoral success through the world's highest national threshold. This situation promoted one-party governments and pushed under-represented or entirely non-represented party supporters to find strategies to get into the Grand National Assembly.

Even though an electoral system under such conditions in Turkey over decades created an opposition voter bloc with concerns including, but not limited to, the fear of wasting their votes on political parties that risk not surpassing the 10 percent national threshold, they have developed strategies to be part of the *alla Turca* representative democracy (see Tokatlı 2020). The most operational strategies that have been utilised in recent decades, independently or together, within the capacity of the legislation on elections and political parties are (1) establishing unofficial electoral alliances amongst small parties, and (2) running with independent candidates. Therefore, this part of the chapter will show how legal bindings (electoral law and political party bans) limit democratic practices in Turkey and how the affected (or possibly affected) parties have made use of the two mentioned strategies to make their supporters' votes count and to turn the tables.

2.2.1. Building unofficial electoral alliances

The influence of the electoral system and easily possible political party bans on Turkey's democracy have been debated by a number of scholars, yet its impact on building Turkish nationals' understanding of democracy has not received the attention it deserves from the opposition groups' perspective. The decades-long suppression that has been imposed on the minor political opposition groups has eventuated them to act together to be part of the parliament. Until 2018, not to facilitate the entry of the small parties it was not possible to set formal electoral alliances. Since 2018, parties can have an official coalition in which they can enter the election as an alliance without renouncing anything that would identify their parties, including having fewer MPs despite the vote share (Çirkin, 2019). Due to the absence of a law banning electoral alliances, to tackle the threshold problem, small parties have either united with

a larger party, renouncing some of their priorities, or created an informal electoral alliance with parties mostly along similar ideological lines. By now, being part of an electoral alliance has become ingrained in the opposition's campaign plan to bypass the national threshold.

The first Kurdish political party, the People's Labor Party (Turkish: *Halkın Emek Partisi*, HEP), for example, joined the Social Democratic Populist Party (Turkish: *Sosyaldemokrat Halkçı Parti*, SHP) for Turkey's 1991 general elections and gained 22 seats in the Turkish Grand Assembly (Güney, 2002, p. 124). Another example of an informal coalition from the same election also helped the Islamist Welfare Party (Turkish: *Refah Partisi*, RP), the successor of the banned National Salvation Party (Turkish: *Milli Selamet Partisi*, MSP), to get back to the parliament. This triple alliance, in addition to the RP, consisted of the extreme right Nationalist Work Party (Turkish: *Milliyetçi Çalışma Partisi*, MÇP) and the conservative right-wing Reformist Democracy Party (Turkish: *Islahatçı Demokrasi Partisi*, IDP). Overall, these parties managed to get 62 MPs and split into three in the aftermath of securing the seats, with, respectively, 41, 18, and 3 seats in the parliament. The HDP appears as the last fitting example to this category, which will be scrutinised in Chapters II and III. The HDP constitutes a union of numerous left-wing movements and is also in an alliance with the Kurdish Democratic Regions Party (Turkish: *Demokratik Bölgeler Partisi*, DBP), partially a predecessor of this party, which enabled it to pass the 10 percent threshold in the June 2015, November 2015 Snap, and 2018 legislative elections as the first pro-Kurdish party (Kaya & Whiting, 2019).

2.2.2. Fielding member of deputy candidates as independents

Running as an independent candidate is nothing new in Turkish politics, stemming from the impossible electoral success of small parties under the 10 percent national threshold obstacle. Yet, what is new about fielding independent candidates after this national threshold is forming a minor party out of these independent candidates that made their way to the Turkish Grand Assembly as MPs. In other words, in the Turkish context, independent candidates lose their original meaning – a politician who has no affiliation with any political party – but rather become a way to set up a small party, since a small party would not surpass the threshold.

To this day, legislative and municipal elections have experienced independent candidates from every region in Turkey. Yet in southeastern Turkey, where the Kurds have constituted a geographically concentrated voter base, the Kurdish independents stood out as the ones who defined what is meant by independent candidates in Turkish parliamentary history.

Since the 1950s, it has been evident that Kurdish identity increased the votes for independent candidates in the Kurdish-speaking regions in southeastern Turkey. And as early as the 1960s, the independent Kurdish candidates took second place in their vote share in that region (Kirişçi & Winrow, 1997, p. 108). Nevertheless, starting from the earlier 1990s, as stated above, the nationalist stance of the Kurdish identity stood as the movement that searched for political representation in the Turkish political scene after the 2002 elections. The results of the 2002 legislative election did not let the Kurdish nationalist DEHAP get any seats in the parliament despite gaining 6.2 percent of the total votes collected nationwide and getting the highest vote share in 13 out of Turkey's 81 provinces (see Figures 9 and 10). In the following legislative elections of 2007 and 2011, in order to overcome the national threshold obstacle, the DTP and the BDP – the successors of the Kurdish nationalist DEHAP – have chosen to circumvent it by fielding independent candidates where these parties had a solid voter base. First, for the 2007 elections, the DTP became the strongest ally of the bloc called the 'Thousand Hope Candidates', and second, for the 2011 elections, the BDP joined the 'Labor, Democracy and Freedom Bloc' as the most powerful ally. According to the election results, respectively 20[100] and 36 MPs entered the Turkish Grand Assembly and formed the party groups of the DTP and the BDP in the parliament.[101] Accordingly, the represented vote share in the parliament changed from a two-party legislative session in 2002, with 54.7 percent, to a multi-party one in 2007 with 87.0 percent. In 2011, disproportionality declined further and the represented vote share increased to 95.4 percent (see Figure 4).

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[100] In total 26, 'Thousand Hope Candidates' entered the parliament. This was the first time in the history of the Grand Assembly that many independents made their way to the parliament.

[101] Law on Political Parties Article 22 permits a minimum of 20 members of parliament to form political party groups in the parliament.

2.3. Concluding remarks

As seen, the evolution of Turkish political parties has produced two types of political culture. The first belongs to the parties in power, that these parties try to eliminate any challengers, and the second is that the challenger attempts to survive and adapt within its limits.

Over decades, Turkey has become a stage for many changes to its party and electoral systems,[102] despite its relatively young democratisation history, which practically started with the multi-party era. Turkey has seen historically high levels of disproportionality in how votes are reflected in parliamentary seats, as the electoral system fails to adapt to voters' demand to back more and more parties over time. Turkey, particularly with the start of the multi-party era, has experienced many changes in its electoral system. Nevertheless, to this day, the party and electoral regulations have proven that these changes have only strengthened the predominant party system. This situation firstly restricted the room for the opposition parties to represent themselves in the parliament proportionately. Secondly, it allowed the governing party to become authoritarian in that it has direct control over the media, bureaucracy, and judiciary; exploits public resources; and oppresses the opposition parties.

However, as we have seen, the biggest challenge political parties have started facing to this day, particularly the small and opposition ones, came with the 1982 Constitution. This constitution introduced the combination of the d'Hondt formula and the 10 percent threshold beginning with the 1983 elections. In addition to Turkey's already-questioned free and fair election experiences, the d'Hondt representation formula, with the 10 percent threshold added to the calculation, proved to cause even less proportion in representation (see Figure 5).

This system has disadvantaged smaller parties like the HADEP and the DEHAP, which got significant support regionally, as in the case of the 1999 and 2002 elections respectively, or even the more established bigger parties like the CHP and the ANAP in the 1997 election, that got appreciable levels of support across the country as a whole, but could not pass the national threshold and accordingly were not represented in the parliament. In line with the highly unlikely

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[102] See Arslantaş (2019) and Arslantaş et al. (2020) on the Turkish electoral systems and their effects from the multi-party era onward.

possibility of being in the parliament by bypassing the threshold, the smaller parties found other ways to get into the parliament (see Figures 6, 7, 8 and 9).

There is a highly interconnected relationship between the legislation and the escape routes that minority, small, or newly emerging parties find for political representation. The restricted possibility of electoral entry and success for such parties is due to the legislative changes, mainly the easily enforced party bans. The national electoral barrier offers little to no space for small and newly emerging parties. This situation has been pushing small political organisations to find alternative ways, within the capacity of the legislation on elections and political parties, to represent their supporters in the political institutions: forming informal electoral alliances and fielding candidates as independents in order to bypass the 10 percent national threshold. These two strategies of the small parties that would not likely have enough support to surpass the threshold did help these parties secure seats in the parliament and, accordingly, help to decline disproportionality in representation. Nevertheless, neither of these solutions offers a long-lasting solution, leaving the discrimination against smaller parties in effect to this day.

3. Legislative paths to external voting and its implementations

As detailed above, the undemocratic developments of the 1980s have created a more limited opportunity for opposition groups to flourish in Turkey's political scene. Nevertheless, that decade also witnessed the first steps towards the recognition of non-resident eligible citizens as electorates, even if it was more symbolic. By nature, extending voting eligibility to non-resident eligible electorates can be pursued as a democratic step; however, given the direct or indirect political suppression the in-country electorates underwent, interpreting the recognition of non-resident citizens as voters as a step towards democratisation would hardly be a realistic perspective.

This last part of Chapter I will have two major sections to unpack. The first one will focus on the emergence and the evolution of the voting rights of non-resident citizens within the borders of Turkey. Therefore, this part will cover the timeline from 1987 to 2012, until the actual extraterritorial rights were granted to non-resident eligible nationals.

The second part will have three subsections that will scrutinise the adoption of external voting into the electoral law and therefore will concern the period between 2012 to 2018, from the activation of the external rights until the end of my dissertation's case elections. Accordingly, this part will give detailed information on the Turkish way of adopting external voting. Then the implementation in the first three elections (2014 Presidential, June 2015, and November 2015) will be elaborated, and the problems that emerged due to the 2017 Referendum implementations will be briefly analysed. Lastly, the deficiencies and shortcomings of external voting will be evaluated concerning the out-of-country extension of the ruling party AKP's oppression that aims to keep oppressing the opposition, especially small opposition parties.

3.1. Symbolic recognition of non-resident citizens as electorates

Until Turgut Özal's ANAP took power in 1983, expatriate citizens, even those within the country during the electoral period, had no voting rights for national or local elections, nor for referenda. That is why the Özal era marked a turning point in the Turkish state's foreign policy orientation that started taking the increasing volume of its non-resident citizens into consideration. There are essential variations in the ANAP government's ruling related to Turkish citizens abroad. Granting voting rights to these citizens amongst others was at the top of the Özal government's agenda.[103] This section will first give detailed information on the steps taken resembling external voting. It will then elaborate how the recognition of expats as voters had a symbolic meaning rather than tagging these citizens as emerging political actors.

The steps that gave way to the inclusion of Turkish nationals abroad in the elections started with the legislative change in 1987 during the ANAP era. The government amendment to Article 94 of the Turkish Constitution recognised non-resident eligible Turkish citizens as part of the national electorate for the first time by granting them the right to vote in general elections and referenda at the border crossings (see Table 1). Seven elections were held from 1987 to 2011 in which expats could vote at the border crossings.

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[103] The chronological significance of the birth of these events, which has direct relation to Turkey's growing diaspora, can be found in Chapter II, and for the more recent diaspora engagements of the ruling party AKP, see, among others, Arkilic (2020) and Yener-Roderburg (2020).

Article 94 of the Turkish Constitution, which regulated the *right to vote, to be elected, and to engage in political activity*, necessitated that non-resident citizens shall not be registered to the in-country electoral roll and be residing out-of-country no less than six months to be able to gain the right to vote in general elections and referenda at the border crossing points that would be polling stations as well 75 days prior to the election day and until 17:00 on election day (Gözler, 2000, p. 283). This new development came as the primary signifier of the recognition of the volume of the diaspora and their non-temporary, most likely permanent, residential status in their host countries, where they went as guest workers from the early 1960s on.

The initial reason for setting a timeline of over two months for expatriates to vote was to overlap this period with these nationals' expected visit period, which would be summer. Despite the specifics of the law, in two consecutive elections in 1987 and 1991, following the acceptance of this Act in 1987, the border crossings turned into polling stations for only 15 days.[104] Furthermore, neither of these elections took place during summer or overlapped with an official holiday of the largest residence countries of the Turkish emigrants. The regulations that concerned the length of the electoral period, which determined the regulation of expats voting at the border crossings, were not limited to these two elections. This discretionary decision varied from election to election by the Supreme Election Council of Turkey, which also underlined that the enfranchisement of non-resident citizens had a more symbolic meaning, removed from practicality, and thus disregarded the feasibility issues concerning the expat voters.

The first election held with the new regulation in 1987 had only 47,942 non-resident citizens' votes, which were less than 0.2 percent of the country's total cast votes (24,603,541). As a result, it marked the lowest rate among the seven elections held before external voting was enabled in 2014 (see Figure 11). The highest attendance amongst the seven elections was observed in the 2007 General Election, with the participation of 226,784 non-resident voters (see Figure 11). Due to the unavailable data on the registered number of eligible non-resident nationals for the 2007 election, we cannot analyse the turnout rate among the citizens abroad. However, unexpectedly, the votes of the non-resident citizens, once they were added to the country total,

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[104] Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi, Dönem 17, Yasama Yılı 5, Tutanak, 14.10.1987, P.8. See the following link for the details of the Act: https://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d17/c044/tbmm17044003ss0620.pdf

changed the electoral balance and moved one of the seats of the independent candidates to the AKP (Ntvmsnbc, 2007, July 29).

Available data from the 2011 General Election both on the ballots cast by expats (129,283) and on the total number of registered non-resident citizens (2,568,979) indicate that the turnout rate for this election was just above 5 percent among the total number of the citizens registered abroad. Whereas the in-country results for the 2011 General Election presented 83 percent turnout (almost 44 million out of 52.8 million citizens voted), the turnout of the non-resident citizens registered to the electoral roll reached only 0.3 percent of the total cast votes (see Figure 2).

As these numbers prove, the non-resident citizens' votes did not affect marginal changes in the payoffs of voting. Therefore, recognising non-resident citizens as voters with Article 94 did not necessarily aim to change the electoral balance. It had rather a symbolic meaning for the expats and, in return, a more strategic one for the Turkish government. Considering the first vast number of economic migrant intake who arrived at their destination countries in the early 1960s, more than two decades before the issue of external voting came to the parliament's agenda, the expats were the catalysers of the suffering Turkish economy, and voting rights were only one way of showing the gratification of the Turkish government.

Figure 11. Vote share of the political parties by those voted at the border crossings and in-country only (between 1987 and 2011)

Elections	29.11.1987		20.10.1991		24.12.1995		18.04.1999		03.11.2002		22.07.2007		2007 Referendum		12.06.2011	
Valid votes/ External residents	47.942 (0.2%)		45.192 / -		86.601 / -		65.254 / -		114.035/ -		226.784 (0.64%) / -		24.880 (0.08 %) / (11.09.- 21.10.2007)		129.283 (5.03%) / 2.568.979	
	Border*	In-country	Border*	In-country	Border*	In-country	Border*	In-country	Border	In-country	Border	In-country	Border	In-country	Border	In-country
1st Party	-	ANAP 36.3%	*RP %38.6*	*DYP 27.0%*	*RP*	*RP 21.4%*	*DSP*	*DSP 22.2%*	AKP 32.9%	*AKP 34.3%*	AKP 56.8%	*AKP 46.5%*	75.3% Yes	68.9% Yes	AKP 61.9%	AKP 49.8%
2nd Party	-	SHP 24.8%	*ANAP*	*ANAP 24.0%*	*ANAP*	*ANAP 19.6%*	*FP*	*MHP 18.0%*	CHP 23.0%	*CHP 19.4%*	CHP 17.8%	*CHP 20.9%*	n/a	n/a	CHP 26.2%	CHP 26.0%
3rd Party	-	DYP 19.1%	*SHP*	*SHP 20.8%*	*DYP*	*DYP 19.2%*	MHP	*FP 15.4%*	MHP 10.0%	DYP 9.6%	MHP 14.7	*MHP 14.3%*	n/a	n/a	MHP 8.2%	MHP 13.0%
4th Party	-		*DSP*	*RP 16.9%*	*DSP*	*DSP 14.6%*	*ANAP*	*ANAP 13.2%*	ANAP 8.7%	MHP 8.4%	SP 3.0%	DP 5.4%	n/a	n/a	SP 1.6%	Ind. 6.6%
5th Party	-		*DYP*	*DSP 10.8%*	MHP	*CHP 10.7%*	CHP	*DYP 12.0%*	GP 5.6%	GP 7.3%	DP 2.7%	*Ind.[105] 5.3%*	n/a	n/a	DP 0.6%	SP 1.3%
										Indp.[106] 1.0%						

Right wing parties: RP, FP, SP, ANAP, DYP, MHP, GP, DP, AKP
Left wing parties: SHP, DSP, CHP, Independent MPs.

Notes: (1) Parties and independent candidates that are typed *italic* indicate that they got in the parliament. (2) *The election results for the border crossings of these elections are not available. To be able to obtain that information, further investigation where the border crossings on a district base are included might likely give the necessary information. To illustrate, the Ataturk airport which was one of the border crossing polling stations included in Istanbul electoral district. Thus, checking the specific local ballot box election results would give a certain level of data on the desired information.

Sources: Compiled by author using YSK (2011, 2020)

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[105] 26 MPs got to the parliament as independents. 20 of these MPs formed the left-wing Kurdish nationalist Democratic Society Party (Turkish: *Demokratik Toplum Partisi*, DTP).

[106] 9 MPs got to the parliament as independents.

Nevertheless, there are three highly significant outcomes we can draw from the implementation of Article 94, which was the only voting method for the external voters:

(1) More than two decades of experience helps us to draw one highly critical conclusion: the political orientation of external voters. The vote share for the presidential candidates and political parties by those who voted at the border crossings and in-country between 1987 and 2011[107] (until the expatriate enfranchisement was enabled) indicates that the eligible out-of-country voters favoured the conservative right-wing parties more than the centre-right or left-wing political parties (see Figure 11) (Umpierrez de Reguero et al., 2021). Furthermore, independent of the election results, regarding the profile of the emigrants, the political orientation of these groups can be determined (Lisi et al., 2015, p. 272). To illustrate, beyond the legacy of the authoritarian regimes that were prominent for decades in Turkey, it is worth stressing that after the journey of the guest workers (German: *Gastarbeiter*), started in the early 1960s towards Germany and then France and other Western European countries, the groups moving abroad were accordingly linked to low levels of education and low economic and professional background, which has also benefitted the right-wing parties (Umpierrez de Reguero et al., 2021). Therefore, unlike what some studies suggest (Turcu & Urbatsch, 2020), it would not necessarily be correct to claim that Turkey's enfranchisement of non-resident voters was made possible on account of signals that the emigrants gave in favour of the ruling parties and that the AKP therefore initiated it since the signs were there all along.

Neither the RP after their 1995 legislative election victory in and out of Turkey nor the AKP after their victory in and out of Turkey in the consecutive elections of 2002 and 2007 changed the law to make emigrant enfranchisement possible (see Figure 11), although the ANAP had already made a significant step in 1987. As mentioned earlier and detailed in the following sections, the right to vote was extended to remote electorates under the AKP rule in 2012, which was a decade after the AKP got the power to govern. Despite the grounds for the change in the emigrant enfranchisement law, it cannot be built solely on the non-resident support for the ruling party. Moreover, it is equally difficult to believe that the AKP would have passed the necessary

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[107] Elections in which expat voters could enjoy their voting rights at the border crossings until the overseas enfranchisement took place in 1987, 1991, 1995, 1999, 2002, 2007, and 2011.

law even if it had not received the most significant share from the ballot boxes at the border crossings (see Figure 11).[108]

(2) The independent MP candidates were not listed on the ballots of the expat voters. The expat votes are allocated in the country total after they are cast. Because the independent candidates are run regionally, they are, as a result, negatively influenced by the votes of the non-resident citizens that impact the districts of the independent candidates. In the case of the 2007 elections, the DTP's independent candidate of the Thousand Hopes bloc, Sebahattin Suvağcı, was declared to be a member of parliament with a 45-vote difference in Hakkari (one of the Kurdish-majority cities in southeastern Turkey), but lost the election by falling behind Abdulmuttalip Özbek, a candidate of the AKP, by 232 votes once the votes cast by the expats at the border crossings were allocated to the polling districts (Ntvmsnbc, 2007, July 29). The vote-allocating method of the expat votes, which is in force to this day, places already disadvantaged small opposition groups or individuals that are regionally stronger at a further disadvantageous position.

(3) The expatriate voters were getting used to the idea of voting for the homeland, and some of the homeland political parties were already setting up foreign branches, which prepared the required grounds for extending voting rights to destination countries. To this day, the ANAP law that enables eligible non-resident voting at the polling stations set at the border crossings has remained in effect as a method of voting for eligible out-of-country voters, yet it was the only one until the first ever presidential election in 2014.

From this perspective, it is hard to interpret the law introduced by the ANAP government that enabled casting ballots at the border crossings as a step towards creating more accessible, politically democratic grounds for all citizens by including the non-resident citizens and favouring proportional representation due to disregarding the independent candidates. Furthermore, this law amendment does not change that it was a minimal move with the voting methods it offered and the turnout in return (see Figure 11). The ANAP attempt, on the other hand, can only be seen as one of the very political moves to keep close ties with these migrants, rather than acknowledging the voting rights of the migrants as eligible Turkish citizens who were

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[108] Burean (2011) shows that the Insitutional Revolutionary Party (Spanish: *Partido Revolucionario Institucional, PRI*) due to the negative reputation that it had abroad, banned political parties' out-of-country activities such as campaigning and fundraising.

not granted any voting rights in their destination countries as resident non-citizens,[109] and disregarding the unfair conditions it proposes for the regionally strong independent candidates.

3.2. Enabling external voting

The law that enabled non-resident nationals to vote at the border crossings in 1987 during the Özal era remained in force until 2012. In that year, under the AKP rule, the final amendments to the law on Basic Provisions on Elections and Electoral Roll were made, such that the conditions for external voting were at last in place (see Table 1).

This part of the study will, firstly, evaluate the recent changes to the party system/regime/representation, the changes in these concepts under the AKP rule, and the ways in which the opposition parties make use of them to be represented in the Turkish parliament. And secondly, concerning the chronological significance that the AKP has developed, the constitutional reforms to the Turkish electoral system regarding expat voting will be studied.

3.2.1. Adoption of external voting in Turkey

This section will elaborate on how external voting principles have been adopted in Turkish legislation and developed hand in hand with the political power holder, the AKP. To date, out-of-country voting is implemented in more than 100 countries globally, and many of those which have joined in this group within the last three decades are migrant-sending countries. Turkey has been categorised in this migrant-sending group since the early 1960s, yet until 2012, it did not make the conditions ready to join the countries that offer external voting to its non-resident citizens. Lisi et al. (2015) emphasise three main standpoints that may contribute to our perception of implementing the external vote. The first is based on "procedural and institutional arguments, emphasising the importance of international and domestic norms that have promoted emigrants; rights to participate in home country elections" (p. 267). The second approach is based on "an economic perspective" (p.268). From this viewpoint, the main argument that has been used in defence of the implementation of expatriate voting is based on the dependence on

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[109] The country cases (Germany and France) including their citizenship regulations for the guest workers will be examined in Chapter II.

emigrants' remittances (Collyer & Vathi, 2007). The third and most relevant one that would explain Turkey's external voting experience and its development over time is the importance of political factors (Lafleur, 2011, 2013, 2015; Rhodes & Harutyunyan, 2010; Tager, 2006). According to this approach, political parties' interests and competition dynamics may help us understand the processes and content of external voting legislation. Moreover, emigrant associations and lobbies can also play an important role in the debate on emigrants' enfranchisement.

The major flow that characterised the move of Turkish emigrants in great numbers and made the community a newly arising political actor of Turkey was the movement of labour towards Europe beginning in the early 1960s. The guest workers were recruited through a series of bilateral agreements with, respectively, Germany, France, the Netherlands, Austria, Belgium, and Sweden from 1961 to 1967 (Avcı & Kirişçi, 2006, p. 126). Although Turkish emigration slowed down after the early 1970s, as stated earlier, on the grounds of economic and political grounds, the number of Turkish citizens who moved abroad has remained relatively high. According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, there is no specific data on the number of people with a Turkish background, but around 6 million Turkish people live abroad. According to the last elections held in 2018, over 3 million are eligible voters (see Figure 1).

Legislation on expatriates' electoral rights enabled them to vote at the border crossings 75 days prior to the election day;[110] this was in effect beginning in 1987 and was not amended until 1995. Before the 13th General Election in May 1995, as a constitutional amendment[111] by the coalition government of the True Path Party (Turkish: *Doğru Yol Partisi,* DYP) and the Social Democratic Populist Party (Turkish: *Sosyal Demokrat Parti*, SHP), under the DYP's leader Tansu Çiller, expatriates' external voting rights were accepted as a principle of law (see Table 1). However, to this day, the ways in which this right can be utilised have yet to be laid down by any law enforcement.

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[110] Article 1987/298.

[111] Act No. 4121, as amended on July 23, 1995: "Elections and referenda shall be held under the direction and supervision of the judiciary, in accordance with the principles of free, equal, secret, direct, universal suffrage, and public counting of the votes. However, the law determines applicable measures for Turkish citizens abroad to exercise their right to vote." https://global.tbmm.gov.tr/docs/constitution_en.pdf

The long-awaited changes came more than two decades later under the government of the AKP. In early 2008, right after the AKP's second parliamentary election victory, the resolution on electoral rights of citizens living abroad grasped more fundamental amendments that could launch the actual legislation on external voting (Erdem, 2011, February 14). The reforms aimed mainly at two areas: (1) enabling ballot boxes,[112] postal voting, voting at the customs gates, *or* electronic voting; (2) allowing external voting for the presidential election. The main opposition party in that year, the Republican People's Party (CHP), objected to the postal voting as a violation of Articles 2, 11, 67 and 79 of the constitution.[113] Thus, the 'postal voting' phrase was removed from the Article, and the rest of the act remained in effect.

Due to technical, infrastructural insufficiencies, despite their right to vote being granted in 2008, Turkish nationals could not exercise their voting rights abroad for the election following 2008, which was the 2011 General Election. Nevertheless, with the number of amendments on "Law on Basic Provisions on Elections and Electoral Roll" in 2012,[114] the necessary conditions for external voting were finally met. This recognition of non-resident voters as a newly arising political actor gave birth to rapid and various regulations in national laws that interact with the enfranchisement of external voters, followed by many others after the first external voting experience in 2014 (see Table 1).

The phenomenon that nationals residing outside of a country's borders should use their democratic rights in their country of citizenship has received a great deal of attention in recent years. Even though the implementation of external voting linked to several operational procedures and external voting methods varies from country to country, it is still possible to categorise the major features of implementations. This section will cover the four common steps taken in order to operate expatriate voting in practice: (1) eligibility, (2) registration, (3) methods of voting and vote-counting, and (4) representation.

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[112] This refers to voting in person at embassies, consulates, and/or designated other polling stations abroad.

[113] See the mentioned articles in detail at the following links:
http://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/eskiler/2008/07/20080705-15.htm
https://global.tbmm.gov.tr/docs/constitution_en.pdf

[114] See the link for the details: http://www.mevzuat.gov.tr/MevzuatMetin/1.4.298.pdf

3.2.1.1. Eligibility

By becoming a global trend, out-of-country voting has also brought about different ways of implementing it. Implementation of the external vote varies from stateto state, depending on the choice of the administrative procedure (Thompson, 2007). Regardless of the country, the first criteria to consider for external voting rights are the eligibility criteria. A majority of countries award voting rights to the people who possess their citizenship.[115] However, there are certain eligibility restrictions for some countries based on current residency status (Finn, 2021), profession (Hutcheson & Arrighi, 2015, pp. 891–892), and the election type. "In most countries expatriates can only vote in national elections, and not in regional and local ones. … Some countries also differentiate between voting rights in parliamentary and presidential elections, and in referenda" (Bauböck, 2007, p. 2429).[116]

Turkish external citizens voting eligibility is two-phased: the first is to be eligible as an individual, and the second is to reside in an eligible country. This section will explain the phases in detail.

(1) Individual eligibility: Turkey's nationality law is based primarily on *jus sanguinis*, which is a sufficient reason to be an electorate as well as to be elected,[117] unlike some other countries (e.g., the UK and Germany).[118] There was also no opposition against the eligibility of those who are *jus sanguinis* Turkish. The Portuguese parliament went through a debate in the early 2000s on the grounds that *jus sanguinis* Portuguese would likely have weak ties to the country and therefore should not be able to vote. This argumentation was also proposed for Portuguese emigrants who lack knowledge on homeland politics and the parties and, accordingly, should not be granted voting rights (Lisi et al., 2015, p. 273). In the Turkish parliament, however, despite

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[115] "Assuming a potential voter registers to vote and is not disenfranchised by other universal restrictions such as age or criminal convictions" (Hutcheson & Arrighi, 2015, pp. 890–891).

[116] See IDEA & IFE (2007), Annex A, for the list of the countries and their experiences with implementing external voting. Even though this publication is no longer up to date, there is no newer publication available that grasps the implementation of external voting in all the countries that now have it.

[117] The citizenship law of Turkey also enables Turkish citizenship for *jus soli* only to prevent statelessness (Kadirbeyoğlu, 2012).

[118] See the following link for more on the issue: http://www.gesetze-im-internet.de/bwahlg/__12.html

similar issues being raised by non-partisan factions (e.g., Turkish Expat Voters), neither of these topics was raised in the parliament's external voting talks.

As amended on July 23, 1995, Act No. 4121, Article 67 on "Right to vote, to be elected and to engage in political activity" of the Turkish Constitution, all Turkish citizens over 18 years of age "have the right to vote, to be elected, to engage in political activities independently or in a political party, and to take part in a referendum"[119] (Hutcheson & Arrighi, 2015, pp. 891–892). Including the non-resident nationals, all citizens "[a]s amended on July 23, 1995; Act No. 4121, and on October 3, 2001; Act No. 4709, *who are* [p]rivates and corporals at arms, cadets, and convicts in penal execution institutions excluding those convicted of negligent offences shall not vote". The same conditions are also valid for Turkish citizens residing abroad, excluding local elections.[120] Turkish nationals neither in-country nor out-of-country are not eligible to take part in local elections.

(2) Territorial eligibility: In Turkish external voting, setting up polling stations in a country depends on the presence of at least 500 registered citizens. Countries that have fewer than 500 registered Turkish nationals in their electoral roll are exempt from the enforcement.[121] The expatriates living in these countries are personally still eligible for voting. They can either vote in-country or pay a visit to another country with a polling station to cast their votes. Countries in this category host 18,041 Turkish nationals, according to the latest data provided by the Supreme Electoral Council of Turkey. This number consists of only 0.62 percent of the total external voters. In other words, for the elections held since 2014, ballot boxes were provided to more than 99 percent of the non-resident citizens in their countries of residence.

3.2.1.2. Registration

Even though eligibility is the key criterion for external voting, registering citizens living abroad is necessary to activate their voter status. The number of citizens abroad temporarily or permanently could be calculated based on a combination of migration, status-granted refugees,

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[119] Before this amendment, the voting age was 20.

[120] See Act no. 298 at the following link: http://www.mevzuat.gov.tr/MevzuatMetin/1.4.298.pdf

[121] Act no. 4320, Date of the decision: 17/02/2015 and Act no. 1570, Date of the decision: 31/08/2015.

and the rules of acquisition and loss of citizenship. However, to this day, such a comprehensive source has not been established, making the measurement of the external population difficult. The most standard way of counting the citizens living out of the country is via their registration. Unlike automatic registration of internal voting by resident citizens of most countries, emigrant voting generally requires an individual application called active registration (Hutcheson & Arrighi, 2015, pp. 893–894). This voluntary action, which is not like a legal duty or directly affecting the expatriate voters, does not offer much to appeal to them either. Therefore, the issue of registration remains the foremost problem impeding the enfranchisement of external voters (Finn & Besserer, forthcoming). Comparative electoral studies show that automatic registration has a remarkable positive effect on voter turnout (Bauböck, 2007, p. 24; Ciornei & Østergaard-Nielsen, 2020).

For in-country voting, eligible Turkish citizens are automatically registered on the electoral roll. Unlike automatic registration of resident citizens, Turkish expatriates need to make an individual application in person or via post to the Turkish consulates of their host countries. In other words, active registration is the sole way these nationals cast their votes for the Turkish elections and referenda. Not participating in elections has a legal sanction for resident Turkish citizens, while non-resident Turkish citizens are exempt from this enforcement. Even though the practicability of imposing sanctions against non-voters remains debatable, these citizens are liable to pay 22 Turkish Liras for not showing up at the polling stations since the 1983 elections.

Expatriates are by law forced to register their current residences two weeks before the election with the diplomatic mission with which they are affiliated. Late registrations are punished by a pecuniary penalty. The citizens who do not wish to register themselves with the Turkish diplomatic missions do not face any sanctions apart from not being able to vote. According to the Supreme Election Council of Turkey's November 2015 data, there are only 2,187 citizens who fit this profile.

3.2.1.3. Methods of voting and vote-counting

Being eligible and registered to cast a vote abroad as an expatriate is the "only equation when it comes to accessing electoral rights" (Hutcheson & Arrighi, 2015, p. 894). The main concern is the accessibility of electoral rights. For in-country voters, voting usually takes place at a local

polling station with a paper ballot. Yet this situation could not be the case for non-resident voters; on account of this impossibility, countries that have extended the franchise to external citizens provide different ways for expatriates to exercise their voting rights. Some states give only one voting method to their citizens residing abroad, while others offer mixed methods. The universally adopted voting methods can be listed under five categories:

(1) In-country voting: There are still countries that have not enabled voting outside of the borders (e.g., Israel, Malta and Uruguay) (Margheritis, 2022). In these countries, nationals residing abroad can only vote if they are present on election day at their local polling station or the customs gates prior to election day. Even though this method is somewhat functional when the external voter is in the territory or travelling there within the determined days through the designated customs gates, it still does not meet the primary conditions of out-of-country voting. External voter registration and separate out-of-country polling stations do not exist in the in-country voting method. This method has been in use in Malta, Israel, and some other countries. In these countries, participation is usually determined by how well the political parties are organised. "Political parties use this opportunity by organizing chartered bus tours or flights for their expatriate supporters" (Bauböck, 2007, p. 2403).

(2) Voting in person at embassies, consulates, and/or polling stations abroad: With this method, citizens residing abroad must visit a polling station in person for voting. Polling stations, in almost all cases, are embassies and consulates (see, e.g., Finn, 2021). This "provides a controlled environment where problems of secrecy of voting and verification of voter identity can be minimized" (Bauböck, 2007, p. 2404). Setting up a particular polling station is usually experienced in countries with a larger concentration of emigrants, including Turkey, Algeria, Cyprus, and Mexico, a few of the many countries that, in addition to in-country voting, offer this type of personal voting to their citizens living abroad.

(3) Postal voting: Postal voting is now the most common method for external voting in Western Europe and North America (Bauböck, 2007, p. 2404). This method decreases the personal cost created by voting at embassies, consulates, and/or polling stations. In addition, it is logistically more convenient for the voter. However, there are three main problems with the postal vote that should be mentioned. The major one is that postal voting does not guarantee

voting freedom and secrecy. Secondly, this system would not work well in countries where the postal service is unreliable and/or slow. Lastly, with postal voting, expatriates can vote days prior to the actual election day, and "voters will not be informed about late developments during the election campaign that might have influenced their preferences" (Bauböck, 2007, p. 2404). The Netherlands allows postal voting to its citizens abroad only for work purposes, while many other nations do not impose another eligibility criterion besides possession of citizenship (Hutcheson & Arrighi, 2015, p. 895).

(4) Proxy voting: In this method, an elector can appoint another person to vote on her/his behalf at the polling station (Grotz, 2000). The disadvantage with proxy voting is that there is no guarantee whether the authorised person will vote as instructed. The implementation of proxy voting is not only rare but also varied. In Poland, for example, proxy voting is permitted only to those disabled and older than 75 (Hutcheson & Arrighi, 2015, p. 895).

(5) Electronic voting: The most recent method that has already taken some countries' interest is electronic voting, which refers to votes that are cast on a computer rather than a paper ballot (see Dandoy & Kernalegenn, 2021; Finn & Besserer, forthcoming). Easier accessibility, diminished cost, and less need for personnel are the major advantages of electronic voting. However, many approaches underline the risks that it may give way to, two of which are the risks of the system failure and the possibility of fraud. With advancing technology, this method will likely take more countries' attention for their future elections. Yet there are only a few countries such as Ecuador, Estonia, France, Switzerland and the USA are currently using this method (Braun Binder & Ellis, 2007; Dandoy & Umpierrez de Reguero, 2021; Germann, 2021).

The external vote-counting procedure is another pivotal procedure that has different applications in each country. Often, external votes travel from the host country to the home country, where they are counted. Even though this uneconomic, long, and toilsome process brings questions about its secrecy and safety, it remains the most commonly preferred way to this day. Despite the significance of the vote-counting procedure, how the counted votes are allocated and represented attracts more significant attention.

Since 1987, non-resident Turkish nationals can cast their votes for general elections and referenda in-country or at border crossings if and only if they are registered to the electoral roll. Even though electronic voting has also passed with the final regulations of 2012, this method, due to technical insufficiencies, has not been made applicable. Since 2014, the laws regulating the external vote established mixed methods of voting in person at the border crossings and the Turkish diplomatic missions or other designated polling stations. There have been certain nuances in external voting regulations with each election held after 2014 (see Table 6). The main differences between the polls reflected in the election results are removing the appointment system and permitting voting at any polling station. This point will be detailed in the section below.

With Article 79 of the Turkish Constitution,[122] the Supreme Election Council appeared as the highest electoral authority for elections taking place extraterritorially. Its mission is to guarantee the principles and rules of the constitution are upheld, and therefore, from the start till the end of elections to manage the order of elections with honesty, to undertake or provide undertaking all necessary transactions, to examine all electoral complaints and objections and to give final decisions on such complaints and to accept electoral minutes of members of Turkish Grand National Assembly and minutes of presidential elections.

The Supreme Electoral Council of Turkey has established a Ballot Committee and Ballot Safety and Transfer Commission. For all the election practices that took place remotely, externally cast votes were kept at the polling stations of each host country until that country's election period was over, after which the election period ballots were transferred to the Ankara Chamber of Commerce (Turkish: *Ankara Ticaret Odası*, ATO) by the Ballot Safety and Transfer Commission. These votes from all extraterritorial polling stations were gathered and kept in the ATO building until the actual in-country voting day.

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[122] The Article 79 can be found at the following link:
http://www.ysk.gov.tr/ysk/faces/Welcome?_afrLoop=2774609000977223&_afrWindowMode=0&_afrWindowId=
null#%40%3F_afrWindowId%3Dnull%26_afrLoop%3D2774609000977223%26_afrWindowMode%3D0%26_adf.ctrl
-state%3D17tydu63wm_14

In the reference countries Germany and France, where the voting period was the longest among all residence countries (see Tables 3 and 6), cast ballots had around seven days to be transferred from the polling stations abroad to the ATO. After countrywide ballot boxes closed on the actual election day, which is a single day in Turkey, simultaneously with the domestic votes, the external ballots were counted on the ATO premises.

Table 6. External voting implementation for the Turkish elections (between 2014 and 2018)

	2014 Presidential	2015 June, Legislative	2015 Nov., Legislative	2017 Referendum	2018, General
Identification documents to vote	Valid Turkish ID or Turkish passport	Valid Turkish ID or Turkish passport	Valid Turkish ID or Turkish passport	Valid Turkish ID or Turkish passport	Valid Turkish ID or Turkish passport
Length of polling at the EX PSs* (days)	1 to 4	1 to 24	1 to 18	1 to 14	1 to 13
Precondition for voting (if eligible)	Once by post or in-person registration at a registered diplomatic mission	Once by post or in-person registration at a registered diplomatic mission	Once by post or in-person registration at a registered diplomatic mission	Once by post or in-person registration at a diplomatic mission	Once by post or in-person registration at any diplomatic mission
Number of countries / PSs	54 / 103	54 / 112	54 / 113	57 / 117	60 / 123
Voting method	In person via appointment (at a designated PS)	In person (at a designated PS)	In person (at a designated PS)	In person (at a designated PS)	In person (at any extraterritorial PS)

*"EX PSs" stands for *extraterritorial polling stations.*

Sources: Built from the ideas with additional data in select literature (Umpierrez de Reguero et al., 2021; Yener-Roderburg, 2020)

3.2.1.4. Representation

Representation of the expatriate vote is the last significant step of an external voting mechanism. Regarding the immigrant vote, there are chiefly four prospects in which the votes of the external citizens are represented: assimilation by biographical ties, assimilated representation into a

specific electoral district, assimilated representation into the in-country national total, and discrete representation.[123]

(a) Assimilation by biographical ties: With this way, ballots of external voters "are added to the electoral roll in their last district of residence, or in their parents' district of residence if they have never lived in the country" (Bauböck, 2007, p. 2403).

(b) Assimilated representation into a specific electoral district: The difference between this representation type and the one above is that the external votes are allocated to a specific electoral district decided by the state. For example, some countries add external votes to a single voting district within the state, usually the capital. Some others randomly allocate the external ballots, while some assign them to the districts with lower turnout than average.[124]

(c) Assimilated representation into the in-country voting total: This type of representation distributes the votes of emigrants among existing national districts in direct proportion to two criteria: the population of the districts and the voting rate of the political party within the external votes. After allocating the ballots, the electoral rules in the national territory would apply to the results.

(d) Discrete or 'special' representation: This involves establishing districts abroad depending on the number of registered citizens and forming separate electoral districts (e.g., Colombia, Ecuador, Italy, France and Portugal). This way of representation protects both parties' interests by dividing expatriate groups' representation and segmenting that community's political interests (Hutcheson & Arrighi, 2015, p. 896; Palop-García, 2018).[125]

Extending the franchise to external citizens does not necessarily mean that it would influence the political response of expatriates. In this regard, the scope of representation of the external voters

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[123] For more on the topic see Hutcheson and Arrighi (2015, p. 899).

[124] "A highly manipulable system exists in Belarus, where external votes are assigned to domestic voting districts with lower than average turnout" (Bauböck, 2007, p. 2403). With the former, there is a risk of altered results of an election if the in-country vote is equally split between parties, since even a small number of expatriates may have an effect on the result under such circumstances.

[125] In France, Indonesia, Italy, Latvia, and some other countries, external voters have special representation that secures seats in the legislature (Bauböck, 2007, p. 2403).

is abundantly substantial for the states. Moreover, as the most recent country to adopt external voting, Turkey has shown clear indications by adopting provisions (see Table 1) that have already accepted non-resident voters as a rising political actor for its domestic and foreign politics.

Turkey represents its external voters in the electoral system by *assimilated representation into the in-country voting total.* As stated earlier, this mode of representation distributes the votes of emigrants among existing national districts proportionate to the districts' population and the political party's voting rate within the total external votes. Thus, after allocating the ballots, the electoral rules in the national territory would apply to the results. Yet, in this way, expatriates are exempt from electing an independent candidate from a specific electoral district.[126]

Since 2013, from time to time, the concept of 'abroad deputyship' has been discussed in the Turkish parliament.[127] Offering seats for abroad deputies would mean shifting Turkey's mode of representation from *assimilated representation into the in-country voting total* to *discrete representation.* So far, the proposed methods have referred to the 'all non-residents in one district' mode, which treats all voters abroad worldwide as a single constituency by securing – so far as suggested by the AKP MPs – 10 to 15 seats in the Turkish parliament. Although the leading political parties have positively approached this concept for different motives, it has not come into force.

Concerning Turkey's last two general elections held in June and November 2015, the two-staged procedure has been adopted for vote-counting and vote distribution.[128] The first phase is to determine the political parties that pass the 10 percent threshold to get seats at the parliament. The second phase is to allocate the external votes proportionally throughout each of the 85 electoral districts regarding the number of MPs they elect, independent from the parties receiving more than 10 percent of the national vote. For example, Malatya elected six MPs of the 550 total

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[126] "Each method has a distinct logic: while the first emphasises the extra-territorial nature of the emigrant vote, the second places greater emphasis on the national territory as a requisite for suffrage" (Lisi et al., 2015, p. 268).

[127] For 2013 see T24 (2013, May 3), for 2014 see Anadolu Ajansı (2014, April 26), for 2015 see Al Jazeera (2015a, August 20), and for 2017 see Hürriyet (2017, April 7) and Oda Tv (2017, April 7).

[128] Constitution Article 77. See the following link for the Article 77: http://www.ysk.gov.tr/doc/karar/dosya/2152/2015-474.pdf

seats countrywide, which is 1.1 percent of the total. This equals 1.1 percent of each political party's votes that came from external ballots added to the respective outcome in Malatya (see Sample 1).

For the presidential elections and referenda, the essence of the principle of *assimilated representation into the in-country voting total* has also been adopted for the case of Turkey. In both cases, the votes from abroad and customs were added to the national total.

3.2.2. Analysis of the elections and the implementation differences between the elections

By enabling voting in 2012 for its non-resident citizens externally, Turkey created a new voter population, which was 2,568,979 for the first external voting experience in the 2014 presidential election, then exceeded 3 million in the 2018 presidential and general election (see Figure 2). Considering the registered voters of the 2014 election, the external voter share was 5.028 percent of the total number. This number meant that it had the potential to influence the elections particularly referenda and presidential elections more than the fourth most populous city of Turkey, Bursa, which is represented with 18 members of deputies in the Turkish parliament. To this day, after every succeeding election since the 2014 presidential election, an increase in the participation rate has been observed, which also translates into an escalated impact of external electors in the homeland country election (see Figure 2). As expected, this created competition among Turkish political parties after this new voter bloc and fashioned new political engagement opportunities for migrant groups interested in homeland politics from their host countries, independent of their voting eligibility (see Chapters II and III).

Nonetheless, a chronologically significant point here needs to be underlined: the long-awaited changes that enabled emigrant enfranchisement occurred during the AKP era. This thesis does not aim to analyse the reasons behind the enfranchisement of the non-resident voters; however, this point is to a certain extent connected to the ways in which the elections were implemented and how the opposition parties were responding to it, which makes the AKP's position in preparing the right circumstances critical as well as highly relevant for this study.

This section evaluates the performance of voting mechanisms in Turkey from the enabling of external voting in 2012. But it also examines certain dysfunctionalities and several other

concerning aspects, mainly while the voting principles were being implemented. Thus, this part aims to reveal the well-functioning features and the shortcomings of the external voting regulations in Turkey. Specific emphasis will also be given to the Turkish political parties' influence by acknowledging this factor as being as significant as the legislative implementations.

The conservative, Islamic-leaning AKP was founded in 2001 as the successor to the Islamic RP and the Virtue Party (Turkish: *Fazilet Partisi*, FP).[129] Since the first general election in which it took part in 2002, the AKP has been the most voted as well as the ruling party of Turkey.

Unlike the Portuguese case, in which the authoritarian Salazar regime had little interest in the enfranchisement of Portuguese residing abroad, and the expatriate votes since external voting was enabled in 1976 had favoured the Social Democratic Party (Portuguese: *Partido Social Democrata*, PSD) (Lisi et al., 2015, pp. 270–271) and the Venezuelan case, in which the emigrant enfranchisement is restricted due to the challenged incumbent under Nicolás Maduro's United Socialist Party of Venezuela (Spanish: *Partido Socialista Unido de Venezuela*, PSUV) (Umpierrez de Reguero et al., 2021, pp. 11-12), the non-resident Turkish voters who cast ballots at airport gates and border crossings had shown greater support for the AKP than resident voters since 2007, the AKP's second election (see Figure 11), even before external voting was possible. In the June 2011 General Election, the last election before out-of-country voting was enabled, expatriates cast their votes only at customs gates 24 days prior to the election day (see Tables 4 and 5). The voting turnout rate of expats for this election was 5.03 percent, and the results showed that 61.9 percent of the citizens living abroad favoured the AKP, while 49.8 of the in-country citizens cast ballots for the party (see Figure 11). As the work of Umpierrez de Reguero and his colleagues (2021), also indicates, as in the Venezuelan case, it is hard to imagine that the AKP would have favoured external voting if the support of the diaspora were directed towards another political party. Nevertheless, even though the greater expat support was in favour of the incumbent party, the opposition parties also backed up the AKP's final necessary amendments to the Law on Basic Provisions on Elections and the Electoral Roll to enable external voting in 2012 (Umpierrez de Reguero et al., 2021).

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[129] The RP and the FP were founded in, respectively, 1983 and 1998, then were banned in 1998 and 2001, respectively, by Turkey's constitutional court on charges of disturbing the secular order of Turkey through politicizing religion.

Out-of-country voting reforms, since they were first implemented in 2012, have been exposed to a number of changes. As evident from the elections' turnouts, these changes appeared to have a significant impact on the increasing turnout rate of the expats in each consecutive election (see Figure 2). The observed rise in turnout is based on more than a few factors (see amongst others Burgess & Tyburski, 2020; Østergaard-Nielsen & Ciornei, 2019b). However, due to the scarcity of literature on why expats vote as well as the contextual variety of the specific cases, it is hard to determine the causality between the determinant factors involved in the elections. Nevertheless, the empirical findings that were gathered for this dissertation signify that for the Turkish case, which also appears as a significant case for attracting a significant amount of its non-resident citizens, the two most prominent factors are the legislative reforms in the electoral law that were made in a short period and the diaspora communities that rapidly made themselves available for the elections taking place in their countries of residence (Yener-Roderburg, 2020).

As mentioned earlier and will be detailed in Chapter II, the Turkish citizens residing abroad are clustered in Western Europe. With the electoral reforms of 2012, according to the first numbers obtained from the 2014 presidential elections, Germany has become home to the largest Turkish expatriate community (49.41 percent of all non-resident eligible voters) with its 1,430,134 voters (see Figure 3). France is the second-largest residence country for Turkish people outside of Turkey, with 326,375 eligible voters (10.67 percent of all voters) (see Figure 12). On account of being the countries of residence for approximately 60 percent of the Turkish voters abroad, these two countries attracted in-country political actors the most. Therefore, the primary deficiencies of out-of-country voting mechanisms and the arguments associated with external voting practices in Turkey could be traced optimally from these two country cases.

The last part of this study evaluates how legislative reforms in electoral law with the support of political parties have progressed the political participation of voters abroad in Turkish national elections, presidential elections, and referenda since 2012. Nevertheless, a considerable number of electorates remained unconfident in the overall integrity of the electoral processes. In this regard, this lacking was attributed to shaken confidence in the reliability of the authorised bodies and the government personnel and the hardships involved in the voting method. This section will firstly analyse each election held after the introduction of external voting: August 2014 presidential, 2015 June and November 2015 General Elections, and November 2017

Constitutional Referendum. Each election analysis will consist of the specifics of the election (competing presidential candidates, competing for major parties, election implementation details and the election results), problems that occurred through implications, and the problems that emerged concerning the voting and vote-counting procedure.

Figure 12. Turnouts of the Turkish elections at the polling stations in France (between 2014 and 2018)

Elections	**Number of ballot boxes or missions abroad**	**Number of registered voters**	**Total number of voters**	**Voter turnout**	
				At the missions	**Border crossings**
2014 Presidential	111 ballot boxes (out of 1,186)	298,839 (out of 2,798,726) (10.7 % of all registered voters)	59,544 (19.9 %)	24,960 (8.3 %)	35,583 (11.6 %)
J 2015 General	19 ballot boxes (out of 427)	311,802 (out of 2,866,979)	Not available	115,521 (Not available)	FR not available[130]
N 2015 General	At 6 missions (out of 113). # of boxes unknown	Not available (out of 2,899,069)	Not available	142,950 (Not available)	45.0 %[131] FR not available[132]
2017 Referendum	At 6 missions (out of 120)	326,375 (not available)	Not available	142,776	FR not available
2018 Presidential	At 6 missions (out of 123).	340,699 (out of 3,044,837)	Not available	161,225	FR not available
2018 General	At 6 missions (out of 123).	340,699 (out of 3,044,837)	Not available	161,222	FR not available

Source: Compiled by author using YSK (2020)

3.2.2.1.2014 Presidential election

The August 2014 presidential election is important in Turkish political history because it was the first election in which external voters enjoyed voting rights from their countries of residence. It was also the first popular election of the Turkish president.

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[130] In total 124,432 registered non-resident citizens voted, which translates into 4.34 percent of the total registered non-residents.

[131] In total 10,182 Turkish citizens residing in France voted at the border crossings makes this participation rate 48.16 percent.

[132] In total 138,454 registered non-resident citizens voted, which makes overall 4.78 percent of the total registered non-residents)

For this unique election, the four strongest parties had three candidates. The AKP's candidate was Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, who, by gaining 51.79 percent of the total votes cast, was elected in the first round as the first elected president of Turkey. The joint candidate of the main opposition party CHP and the minor opposition party MHP, Ekmeleddin Mehmet İhsanoğlu, got 38.44 percent of the votes, while the newly established HDP's candidate Selahattin Demirtaş gained 9.76 (see Figure 13). Out-of-country polls showed that, as stated above, Erdoğan was supported extraterritorially more than by in-country voters, winning 62.3 percent of the total votes cast abroad. In comparison, İhsanoğlu received 27.92 percent, and Demirtaş had the least support gained 9.78 of the total casted votes. In Germany and France, Erdoğan was even above the abroad average, receiving, respectively, 68.63 percent and 66.01 percent of the total vote share. By contrast, İhsanoğlu won less than the extraterritorial average from Germany with 23.74 percent of the votes and from France with 15.26 percent. Lastly, Demirtaş, like the in-country results, received the least support from Germany with 7.63 percent, whereas the Turkish residents of France showed greater support for Demirtaş than they did for Ekmeleddin, with 18.73 percent of the overall votes (see Figure 13).

Figure 13. August 2014 Turkish Presidential election results

	Overall ballots	Domestic ballots	External overall	Border crossings	Overseas ballots	Germany ballots	France ballots
Recep Tayyip Erdoğan	51.8 % 21,000,143	51.6 % 20,670,826	62.5 % 329,317	62.7 % 185,444	62.3 % 143,873	68.6 % 76,817	66.0 % 16,329
Ekmeleddin M. İhsanoğlu	38.4 % 15,587,720	38.6 % 15,434,167	29.2 % 153,553	30.1 % 89,070	27.9 % 64,483	23.7 % 26,578	15.3 % 3,774
Selahattin Demirtaş	9.8 % 3,958,048	9.8 % 3,914,359	8.3 % 43,689	7.1 % 21,107	9.8 % 22,582	7.6 % 8,538	18.7 % 4,634
Total (valid votes only)	**40,545,911**	**40,019,352**	**526,559**	**295,621**	**230,938**	**111,933**	**24,737**

Source: Compiled by author using YSK (2020)

Implementation

For this election, in addition to the 41 polling stations at border crossings, 103 polling stations were set in 54 countries, either at Turkey's diplomatic missions or consulates or at designated

rented locations (see Tables 4 and 5). This meant 99.4 percent of the total expatriate electors had the chance to vote in their countries of residence for this presidential election. The rest of the population was expected to go to their designated countries or to Turkish border crossings if they wished to do so. As indicated earlier in this section, to enable territorial eligibility in a specific residence country, that country requires at least 500 registered Turkish nationals on its electoral roll. The expatriates who do not live in countries with at least 500 Turkish nationals from the 2015 elections are personally still eligible for voting: they can either vote in-country or pay a visit to another country with a polling station to cast their votes.

For example, suppose a Turkish citizen resides in Taiwan and wishes to vote in the national elections. Because Turkey does not have 500 registered citizens in Taiwan, the Turkish mission does not offer a polling station facility in that country. As a result, that citizen has two options: either fly to Japan, since her/his designated mission is in the Japanese capital of Tokyo, or pass to one of the border crossings within Turkey where a polling station is set to cast her/his vote. If this Taiwan resident national wants to vote in Japan, she/he can vote in a specified timeline arranged for the Embassy of Turkey in Tokyo. On the other hand, if this person wishes to fly to Turkey to cast a vote, unlike the Italian case, the Turkish government does not financially support their non-resident citizens' transportation costs to participate in the voting exercise.[133] In other words, the citizens who participate in the voting procedure are not obliged to vote, and if they wish, they do so at their own expense.[134]

The electorates were expected to register on the non-resident electoral roll at the Turkish consulate to which their residency was appointed. The registration was possible by post, in person, or by e-mail.[135] In any case, a week-long time window was given to the nationals abroad

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[133] More information on the Italian case can be found at the following link:
http://conslondra.esteri.it/consolato_londra/it/i_servizi/per_i_cittadini/servizi_elettorali/elezioni_politiche

[134] It is a known phenomenon that the RP during the electoral periods of 1991 and 1996 was promoting voting at the border crossings by providing shuttle bus services and plane tickets to its non-resident sympathisers.

[135] Delivering the necessary documents to diplomatic missions was not offered electronically by every mission. Therefore, the nationals were advised to learn the unique conditions the mission they originally enrolled in if they would wish to register to the ballot roll.

to check whether they are already enrolled or not to enrol.[136] This one-time-only registration is enough to validate the voter's eligibility for future elections as well.[137]

Problems emerged in relation to the implementation

Two problems arose from the implementation of this first election experience. The first was the appointment system. According to this system, voters could only vote at the time of their appointment at the polling station where they were registered. The non-resident citizens were given a voting period of one to four days, depending on the country. The residents of Germany and France were given four days (July 31 to August 3, 2014; Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday) as these countries host the largest Turkey-originating diasporas abroad (see Tables 3 and 6). The registered citizens who did not self-book an appointment were automatically given a day and time. Therefore, expecting each national's schedule to suit this appointment system was not realistic. Especially given that there are 13 active Turkish missions in Germany and seven in France it was impossible for weekday workers to fit in the weekend spots. A similar problem was also observed in the case of France.

The second problem was the geographical proximity of the polling stations to the voters' residents. In-person voting made the voting procedure difficult even for those in the same country as their designated polling station. For example, a Turkish citizen who lived in Konstanz in Germany was registered to the Turkish Consulate General of Turkey in Karlsruhe, around 200 kilometres away. When she/he wished to vote, this person needed to go to the consulate in Karlsruhe. The same problem with a more drastic outcome occurred in countries like Australia, Canada, and Russia, where many Turkish nationals live, yet the Turkish missions are not only few in number but also unevenly distributed geographically. However, as stated earlier, in Germany and France, as the countries that emerged as the first targets of the Turkish political parties, these parties' satellites or the migrant grassroots organisations as party alliances abroad took charge and offered shuttle bus services to carry the party supporters from distant destinations to the polling stations. It must be noted that these shuttle bus services were free of

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[136] Law on Basic Provisions on Elections and Electoral Roll, Article 298 Decision no: 2014/2929 and its Appendixes 14/13, 20/A, 28/8, 33, 34, 35 and 94/A dated June 8, 2014.

[137] See the following link for more details: http://hannover.bk.mfa.gov.tr/Mission/ShowInfoNote/209921

charge and therefore were not always reliable in their service. There were occasions in both Germany and France when the buses cancelled their trips simply because they were not full.

These two initial problems of the voting procedure were already discouraging for many citizens abroad. Although, as a result, increasing the number of temporary polling stations at the border crossings from 25 to 41 doubled the border turnouts for this election, the overall turnout rate for non-resident eligible voters was not as much as expected. It remained at 18.94 percent, with only 8.37 percent stemming from out-of-country, while over 10 percent still voted in-country at the border crossings.

Problems emerged in relation to the safety and transparency of the voting and vote-counting procedure

Throughout the 2014 presidential election period, more than a few concerns were raised, particularly against the Supreme Election Council of Turkey. In theory, the Supreme Election Council was the sole authority of the elections in and outside Turkey; however, several non-governmental agencies were involved in the whole electoral process. Nevertheless, the weak appearance of the Supreme Court concerning its capacity to reach over 100 countries for the security of the cast ballots was highlighted on a number of occasions. Despite the establishment of the Ballot Committee and the Ballot Safety and Transfer Commission for the purpose of election safety of the extraterritorial ballots cast, the negative critiques during the elections and the post-election period were not minor. The absence of regulation of the procedures for bringing the cast votes back into the country was the main target of the opposition. All in all, we can talk about four common issues that were raised the most emerged from the extraterritorial voting and vote-counting procedure throughout the 2014 presidential election, all of which remain valid to this day.

The first issue concerned the security of the cast ballots. These ballots were kept in highly questionable conditions throughout the election period at the polling stations. Despite the secure rooms being guaranteed with a multiple-lock system with a minimum of three, the keys were distributed amongst the ballot committee members and the party representatives. This securing system was neither offered at every polling station nor checked by the Supreme Election Council

officials.[138] These security leaks gave birth to public discussions that have yet to be clarified by the Supreme Council members; to this day, this still comes up as one of the significant issues raised by the opposition parties as well as these parties' supporters.

The Ballot Committee and the Ballot Safety and Transfer Commission did not soothe the electorates' concerns on ballot safety, mainly because the voting periods lasted more than a day, the votes were not counted at the end of the day, and the cast ballot papers sealed in bags until they would be transferred to the ATO were kept in rooms with questionable security. Allocating Ballot Committee members to voting stations that remained open for more than two weeks (as in Germany and France) was not possible. Due to extended voting periods and long working hours, counting ballots every day before the casting started and after it ended, as stipulated, was not the case for every ballot box. Photographing the cast ballot paper by law is also forbidden. Yet, seeing as the voting cabin was not possible from where the Committee sits, or on account of other factors, this illegal act was also ignored most of the time. Operating the Committee with two members instead of a minimum of three, starting the voting before the end of the preparations, and the safe rooms were found open where the cast votes were kept are a few of the many malfunctions that repeated in each election. Because the Ballot Safety members or Board members were not available for every occasion, such faults could not be addressed each time.

The second concern was the transportation of the ballots to Turkey. As is said above, there was no regulation released about the transportation of the votes, either to the residence countries before voting or back to Turkey after being cast. Questions were raised again by the opposition parties and their supporters, emphasising the distrust of Turkish Airlines, which was given the responsibility as the official carrier of the ballots from and to Turkey. In addition to the lack of regulations on transportation, Turkish Airlines also has publicly known close ties to the AKP government (Selçuk, 2013). Therefore, some of the electorates already had weak trust in the Ballot Safety and Transfer Commission. That fragile trust faded away when Turkish Airlines entered the voting procedure.

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[138] Law on Basic Provisions on Elections and Electoral Roll, Article 298 Decision no: 2014/2930 and its Appendix 94/C; Law on Presidential Election, Article 6271 and Law on Legislative Election Article 2839, 14/13, 20/A, 28/8, 33, 34, 35, and 94/A dated June 8, 2014.

The third issue was the restricted freedom of the press at the polling stations. According to the Law on Basic Provisions on Elections and Electoral Roll, Article 298/82-1, "the measures to be taken in polling zone cannot be in the essence of preventing the persons who have right to be in that polling zone from following electoral works and operations",[139] and the Supreme Election Council's external voting regulating order numbered 202/22-3 includes members of the media amongst the ones who have a right to be in that polling zone, and underlines that, as long as they do not create an obstacle to the voting procedure, they are free to receive images and information to share with the public.[140] However, members of the media were not permitted to observe the voting procedure but were only given a short window of time under the control of the ballot-box committee.

The last issue emerged concerning the post-election period. Following the end of the elections, the cast ballots were transported from the residence countries and counted in the ATO in Ankara. In contrast, the votes from custom gates were counted in the nearest District Electoral Board. Due to the remote voting period ending a week early, the ballots gathered at the ATO were kept there until the election day to be counted. The ballot security concerns were often vocalised by the non-AKP groups in and outside Turkey due to the involvement of non-neutral agencies in the voting process. Additionally, another problem that emerged from this procedure was mismatching between the numbers of valid ballots and the results announced by the Supreme Election Council. Although volunteers with non-partisan civil initiatives like the Turkish Expat Voters[141] (Turkish: *Gurbetin Oyları*) analysed ballot box records after the Supreme Election Council announcements and objected to certain irregularities, this analysis did not always meet with the timely and required outcome (Gurbetin Oyları, 2015a).

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[139] The Article 298/82-1 can be reached at the following link:
http://www.ysk.gov.tr/doc/dosyalar/Ingilizce/298_en_2018.pdf

[140] For more on the regulations see the following link: http://www.ysk.gov.tr/doc/genelge/dosya/1830/2014-CBS-Ornek202.pdf

[141] The Turkish Expat Votes is a non-partisan grassroots initiative that focuses on Turkish non-resident voters, which was then newly established by the new wave of highly qualified non-resident Turkish nationals who did not become part of any institutionalised diaspora associations in Germany. This group aimed at raising awareness among external voters of voting processes throughout the elections, observing both "the safety of the uncounted ballots during transfer to Turkey" and externally cast ballot count in Ankara, as well as analysing whether the ballot box records of the extraterritorial voting districts' results matched the ones counted in Ankara (Gurbetin Oyları, 2015a, 2015b).

Legislative changes following the 2014 presidential election

Legislative changes made after the 2014 presidential elections were high in number, primarily concerned with making the elections more effective and accessible for non-resident nationals. The first necessary change to facilitate the out-of-country vote was eliminating the appointment system (see Table 6). This quick change following the first external voting experience very likely stemmed from the broad support that the AKP received from the extraterritorial district for its candidate, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, in the 2014 presidential election.

Another reform was on the transportation of the ballots and the other necessary equipment from Turkey to countries where the extraterritorial polling stations would be set, then back to Turkey after the elections. The absence of such regulation with third-party involvement other than Supreme Election Council personnel (i.e., THY and PTT[142]), as stated earlier, created great concern, especially among the opposition groups (Hamsici, 2015, May 18). Therefore, when Article 298, Decision no 2015/408 was put into action to regulate the procedures and principles of the voting materials to be used abroad, delivery of the cast ballots to the Overseas District Election Board in Ankara, cargo procedures and process, and delivery of materials to be brought by diplomatic courier from border countries.

The smaller-scale reforms concerned expanding the polling stations to more destinations where the Turkish missions were present. Regarding the legislative expansion of external voting, no party raised an oppositional voice, unlike many other countries that saw concerns about the legitimation of the extension of voting rights to citizens voting abroad[143] and the cost of this complicated procedure.

3.2.2.2. June and November 2015 legislative elections

The June 2015 Parliamentary Election was not only the second extraterritorially practised election of Turkey but also the first legislative one, bringing more satisfactory results regarding out-of-country participation. The above-mentioned new reforms to the election law regulating

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[142] *Posta ve Telgraf Teşkilatı*, known as PTT domestically and Turkish Post internationally, is the Turkish national post and telegraphy directorate, which has its roots in 1840 with the Ottoman Ministry of Posts.

[143] See Malheiros & Boavida (2003) and Lisi et al. (2015) for the Portugal case.

the citizens residing abroad on cancelling the appointment system, along with other external factors such as better-organised political parties and more aware voters, are the central points given attention regarding the increase in the voter turnout. Nevertheless, the geographical distance of the polling stations from the voters' residences and the in-person voting requirement was still the main problem for the willing nationals.

As stated above, the main change in the electoral law was the elimination of the appointment system. From the June 2015 legislative election on, non-resident citizens could vote any day and time during the determined election period. For this specific election, the election period was a minimum of one day and extended to a maximum of 24 days for some countries, including Germany and France. The number of polling stations was increased from 103 to 112. Six of these nine additional polling stations were introduced to the electorates in Germany. For the 2014 presidential election, Germany had seven polling places, and for the June 2015 general election, this number increased to 13 (see Figure 3). The increase in the number of polling stations in Germany may also be seen as an essential indicator of a drastic turnout change from 8.15 percent to 33.69 percent of Turkish citizens reside in Germany (see Figure 2). But the eligible Turkish voters in France, on the other hand, despite the number of polling stations in that country, did not show proportionately greater interest than the residents of Germany (see Figure 12). Their turnout reads as 35.2 percent in June 2015, as opposed to 8.35 percent in the 2014 elections (see Figure 2). All in all, external voting showed significant improvement in participation (32.50 percent) from the nationals' country of residence, which also triggered a significant drop in turnout at the borders from around 10 percent in 2014 to 4.34 percent in June 2015. Nevertheless, it is worth mentioning that the decreased number of border-crossing polling stations, from 41 to 33, might also have influenced such a drop.

According to the in-country election results, the most successful parties which also passed the 10 percent national threshold were, from the most voted to the least voted, the AKP, the CHP, the MHP, and the HDP. However, the extraterritorial ballots changed the success order: from the most voted to the least voted, the AKP, the HDP, the CHP, and the MHP (see Figure 1 and Graph 1). This election was also interesting because it marked Turkish political party history by witnessing the electoral success of a multi-ethnic and multi-religious party, the HDP. With this election, the HDP, a newly emerging political party—which had listed its co-leader Selahattin

Demirtaş as a presidential candidate in the 2014 elections, in which Demirtaş gained the support of only 9.78 percent of the voters (see Figure 2012)—extraterritorially became the second most voted party. As shown, the HDP, compared to the in-country results, took the fourth spot, the least voted party to make the parliament. As clarified earlier, the causes of the increase in participation in extraterritorial districts are to be found not only in reformed voting procedure mechanisms but also in the role played by the translocal political and civil society actors in fostering voters' mobilisation in residence countries that took place in the succeeding elections. Unfortunately, there is an apparent lack of more empirical studies on the matter. Nevertheless, the case of the HDP alone constitutes a plausible example to prove the impact and significance of these actors despite the multitude of reasons why non-resident eligible citizens turn up at ballot boxes for the home country elections (Ciornei & Østergaard-Nielsen, 2020).

As mentioned earlier, the 'abroad deputyship' concept was on the agenda of the Turkish parliament, not only of the incumbent party (the AKP) but also the main opposition and the minor opposition parties. Nevertheless, the Turkish political parties did not wait for abroad deputyship in other words discrete representation to be legalised and started searching for other means to attract non-resident voters. The first of these strategies was having expatriate candidates in the MP list from this first legislative experience. The Turkish electoral system does not allow voters to choose a specific number of MP candidates within the list. Each party sets their candidate lists, and voters only vote for the parties. Therefore, putting a candidate in an electable position on the list depends on the party authorities. For the June 2015 legislative elections, among the non-resident citizens on the candidate lists, only five of these nationals were listed in electable positions. As a result of the June 2015 elections, all five of these candidates secured seats in parliament: one from the AKP lists and four from the HDP lists. Due to the lack of comprehensive study on the voters' electoral behaviour, we cannot verify the extent to which the elected MPs from the Turkish diaspora were influential on the voters. However, that the two extraterritorially most voted political parties appeared as the AKP and the HDP cannot be seen solely as a coincidence. Although all the leading Turkish parties were attentive to the out-of-country votes, the AKP and the HDP were the most successful parties in mobilising their external supporters and generating a well-functioning campaign (Yener-Roderburg, 2020).

The party programmes of all the parties that were active abroad showed that the AKP was the only party that included external citizens in its party programme (see Table 2). This move by the AKP can be read as an indication that the AKP was the party that had the most expectations from the out-of-country voters. The most positive feedback of the nationals abroad was on the AKP programme focused more on lowering the fee to waive the compulsory military service for male citizens,[144] including the non-resident citizens in the family support programme that gives a one-time payment for the first three children of the family,[145] and offering discounted fare for Turkish Airlines. The AKP has not entirely carried out its promises; however, as seen from the following election results, we cannot be quite sure about the extent of the impact of the party programmes on non-resident voting behaviour.

The increase in the participation rate also increased the share of external electors in the June 2015 election result. Given the imbalanced vote share of the parties within the country and extraterritorially, it was not surprising to see an electoral balance change when the external votes were allocated to the national electoral districts. As a result, two parliamentary seats shifted to the AKP in Amasya and Izmir, and one parliamentary seat moved to the HDP in Kocaeli. The shifts were particularly significant for the HDP since, by getting one seat from the MHP in Kocaeli, the seats of these two parties were equalised at 80.[146]

The legislative conditions provided for the November 2015 Snap Parliamentary Election remained almost the same as the June 2015 election. For this snap election, the non-resident eligible nationals were given 1 to 18 days voting time depending on their countries of residence ranging 54 countries, which was six days less than the previous election in June 2015 (see Table 2). Germany and France's Turkish citizen residents were again given a maximum of 18 days to cast their votes in these countries.[147] The number of polling stations was increased from 112 to

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[144] The fee was reduced from around €6000 to €1000. From 2019 on, the fee has been increased again to over €5000 (Haber Türk, 2019, July 9).

[145] Since May 2015, parents receive a single payment for the birth of each child (for the first child approximately €45, for the second child approximately €60, and for any subsequent children around €90 [calculations dated July 2021]).

[146] See the link for more details on the election results:
http://www.ysk.gov.tr/doc/dosyalar/docs/Milletvekili/7Haziran2015/KesinSecimSonuclari/ResmiGazete/E.pdf

[147] Act No: 1570, Date of the decision: 31/08/2015. See the following link for the enacted decision on the matter:
http://www.ysk.gov.tr/doc/karar/dosya/2053/2015-1570.pdf

113, which did not affect the polling station numbers in Germany and France. Both remained the same, at 13 and 6 respectively, as many as the diplomatic missions in these countries (see Figures 3 and 11).

The number of votes cast in Germany alone increased by 100,000 votes and 19 percent, and in the Netherlands, France, Belgium, and Great Britain, the increases in cast ballots were respectively 37,000, 30,000, 9,000, and 7,000. As a result, from the June 2015 election to the November 2015 election, the turnout in Germany increased from 33.60 percent of Turkish citizens resident in Germany to 40.78 percent (see Figure 2). The eligible Turkish voters in France increased by more than 9 percent within a few months, from 35.2 percent to 44.96 percent (see Figure 2). Thus, the overall extraterritorial participation rate increased from 32.50 percent to 40.01 percent, including the ballots collected from 30 polling stations set at the border crossings, and the turnout of the expats reached almost 45.0 percent although the election period, as mentioned, was shorter (see Figure 2). This meant that more than 255,000 out-of-country voters exercised their voting rights for the November snap election, even though the number of Turkish voters registered abroad was only 32,000 more when compared to the June 7 elections (see Figure 2).

According to the in-country election results of November 2015, the most successful parties which also passed the 10 percent national threshold and managed to get in the Turkish Grand Assembly did not change since the June 2015 elections; from the most voted to the least voted parties were the AKP, the CHP, the MHP, and the HDP (see Figure 2). The results from the extraterritorial polling stations also had an unchanged order in their vote share; from the most voted to the least voted, the parties were as follows: the AKP, the HDP, the CHP and the MHP (see Figure 2).

Nonetheless, there are two interesting deductions one can read from the snap elections of November 2015. First, despite one quarter million additional non-resident voters, the AKP, the HDP, and the CHP were the parties that benefitted from this elevated turnout extraterritorially and in Germany and France (see Figures 1, 13 and 14).

The MHP was the only political party that lost votes from its non-resident voters in Germany and France. The second remarkable point is that despite increasing their extraterritorially cast votes,

the vote shares of the CHP and the HDP decreased due to the greater vote increase of the AKP (see Figure 1). This result was also valid for Germany and France for the November 2015 election (Figures 14 and 15).

Figure 14. Four most voted Turkish Parties at the Germany polling stations, June 2015 and November 2015 Turkish elections, vote share (%) and number of voters

	Elections	*June*	*Nov*	*June*	*Nov*	*June*	*Nov*	*June*	*Nov*
	Parties	**HDP**	**HDP**	**AKP**	**AKP**	**MHP**	**MHP**	**CHP**	**CHP**
	Berlin	8,786	9,471	18,836	23,559	3,471	3,066	10,112	11,010
		20.5 %	19.5 %	44.0 %	48.5 %	8.1 %	6.3 %	23.6 %	22.6 %
		6,736	7,193	29,502	36,987	5,633	5,061	6,499	7,043
	Düsseldorf	13.6 %	12.6 %	59.6 %	64.6 %	11.4 %	8.8 %	13.1 %	12.3 %
		6,335	6,717	27,343	35,031	4,693	4,179	4,649	5,087
	Essen	14.4 %	12.9 %	62.0 %	67.1 %	10.6 %	8.0 %	10.5 %	9.7 %
		10,775	11,487	23,515	30,831	4,827	4,201	8,514	9,179
	Frankfurt	21.9 %	20.2 %	47.8 %	54.4 %	9.8 %	7.4 %	17.3 %	16.2 %
	Hamburg	5,993	6,675	14,360	18,330	2,360	2,163	5,155	5,758
		21.0 %	19.8 %	50.3 %	54.4 %	8.3 %	6.4 %	18.0 %	17.1 %
		7,727	8,576	14,537	20,114	2,427	2,467	4,895	5,520
	Hannover	25.4 %	23.0 %	47.7 %	53.9 %	8.0 %	6.6 %	16.1 %	14.8 %
		5,415	6,247	15,415	21,571	2,391	2,359	4,619	5,151
	Karlsruhe	18.9 %	17.4 %	53.8 %	60.0 %	8.3 %	6.6 %	16.1 %	14.3 %
		9,162	9,588	26,490	34,614	4,405	3,895	7,355	7,997
	Köln	18.9 %	16.8 %	54.5 %	60.8 %	9.1 %	6.8 %	15.1 %	14.0 %
		4,137	4,627	10,382	13,251	1,440	1,340	2,503	2,653
	Mainz	21.9 %	20.8 %	55.0 %	59.5 %	7.6 %	6.0 %	13.3 %	11.9 %
		3,242	3,492	19,254	27,643	3,652	3,290	7,406	8,353
	Munich	9.2 %	8.0 %	54.8 %	63.3 %	10.4 %	7.5 %	21.1 %	19.1 %
		3322	3905	17,487	24,667	2,015	2,015	3,020	3,565
Germany Polling Stations	Münster	12.5 %	11.2 %	65.8 %	71.0 %	7.6 %	5.8 %	11.4 %	10.3 %
		2736	2,863	9,658	13,703	2,766	2,556	4,904	5,321
	Nürnberg	13.2 %	11.4 %	46.5 %	54.8 %	13.3 %	10.2 %	23.6 %	21.3 %
		8884	9,967	28,647	39,898	6,201	6,118	6,503	7,808
	Stuttgart	17.1 %	15.2 %	55.1 %	60.9 %	11.9 %	9.3 %	12.5 %	11.9 %
		83,250	**90,808**	**255,426**	**340,199**	**46,281**	**42,710**	**76,134**	**84,445**
	TOTAL	**17.5 %**	**15.9 %**	**53.7 %**	**59.7 %**	**9.7 %**	**7.5 %**	**16.0 %**	**14.8 %**

June 2015: In total 475,885 valid votes
November 2015: In total 569,836 valid votes
Source: Compiled by author using YSK (2020)

Figure 15. Four most voted Turkish Parties at the France polling stations, June 2015 and November 2015 Turkish elections, vote share (%) and number of voters

	Elections	June	Nov	June	Nov	June	Nov	June	Nov
	Parties	HDP	HDP	AKP	AKP	MHP	MHP	CHP	CHP
France Polling Stations	Bordeaux	1,865	1,969	2,322	3,241	370	408	463	536
		44.5 %	31.5 %	55.5 %	51.8 %	8.8 %	6.5 %	11.1 %	8.6 %
	Lyon	1,452	1,708	15,376	22,773	1795	1,773	1,295	1,527
		7.3 %	6.0 %	77.2 %	80.6 %	9.0 %	6.3 %	6.5 %	5.4 %
	Marseille	4,819	4,828	2,726	4,090	202	193	520	542
		58.3 %	49.4 %	33.0 %	41.8 %	2.4 %	2.0 %	6.3 %	5.5 %
	Nantes	1,870	2,057	3,541	5,005	409	364	527	586
		29.5 %	25.3 %	55.8 %	61.6 %	6.4 %	4.5 %	8.3 %	7.2 %
	Paris	18,280	19,694	17,088	24,872	2749	2,433	4,441	5,017
		42.9 %	37.0 %	40.1 %	46.7 %	6.5 %	4.6 %	10.4 %	9.4 %
	Strasbourg	5,381	6,248	16,618	22,361	2,455	2,309	3,717	3,929
		19.1 %	17.6 %	59.0 %	63.0 %	8.7 %	6.5 %	13.2 %	11.1 %
	Total	**33,667**	**36,504**	**57,671**	**82,342**	**7,980**	**7,480**	**10,963**	**12,137**
		29.6 %	**25.8 %**	**50.7 %**	**59.0 %**	**7.0 %**	**5.3 %**	**9.6 %**	**8.6 %**

June 2015: In total 113,669 valid votes
November 2015: In total 141,162 valid votes
Source: Compiled by author using YSK (2020)

Even though the MHP's loss of votes may suggest the possibility of measuring the volatility between the two elections, the second point, the marginal increase in the number of voters, does not allow a volatility check of the total proportion between the two elections. However, the assumption can be depicted from the studies that focus on in-country results, where the MHP also had a 4 percent loss, which can be translated into the MHP's vote shift in June 2015 to the AKP. Nevertheless, this is only an assumption that necessitates further research on volatility to be proven.

Nevertheless, this snap election was of critical importance that constitutes the reasons behind the electoral realignment in such a short amount of time. The HDP, by entering the parliament unexpectedly, stopped the AKP from winning an outright majority, which necessitated a coalition to govern. When the coalition talks among the opposition parties did not work out, the

snap election was required (Nardelli et al., 2015, October 28). Thus, from the opposition's point of view, the snap election of November 2015 stemmed from the intentionally failed coalition talks (Bardakçi, 2016).

Other factors, particularly those deriving from the political parties, played a significant role in elevating the participation rate in this election. The leading political parties recognised the power of the non-resident votes with the June 2015 election and unsurprisingly put greater effort into their remote campaigns. This time, the AKP, HDP, CHP, and MHP paid well-organised visits to European countries, including Germany, France, the Netherlands, Austria, Belgium, and Switzerland. In addition, shuttle bus services that carried voters to the polling places, systematised by the parties and other organisations, were the chief factor that boosted the voter turnout. Apart from the MHP, the other parties, particularly the AKP, increased their voter population significantly (see Figure 1). Although the total allocated number of external votes increased by around 242,000, this election had a slighter direct effect on the parliament's electoral balance. Only one seat, in Manisa, shifted to the AKP from the MHP.

Problems emerged in relation to the implementation

The transparency and, accordingly, the safety of the ballots were still issues for both elections. However, for both of the legislative elections that were held in June and November 2015, the main problems put forward were (1) malfunctioning authorised bodies, (2) negligent and unfair officers in charge, and (3) uneven extraterritorial reach of the parties.

(1) The Supreme Election Council of Turkey announced last-minute changes to regulations during and after each election, one of which was prolonging the ballot boxes' opening time from 19:00 to 21:00. Although the decision was made favouring the nationals who were willing to vote, these nationals were not informed. So, electorates who believed they were late to vote could not make use of this opportunity. Moreover, with this new practice, ballot committee and party observers had to work overtime, 12 hours instead of 9 hours per day. This situation was especially problematic for the government servants of the committees, as they already lacked the staff to switch shifts. Therefore, some of them worked throughout the election period, which reached over 20 days in some other out-of-country polling stations, including Germany and France.

(2) Representatives that the government or the political parties appoint from the start to the end of elections come under the rule of the Supreme Election Council. Thus, these officers are obliged to act following the law. Furthermore, according to the rules and regulations, ballot workers, party observers, security forces, and the press can be present at the ballot boxes to provide election transparency. However, representatives of the HDP were not welcomed at some voting stations, or when they were, they were not allowed to observe how the ballot committee functions,[148] whereas the Union of International Democrats (or Union of European Turkish Democrats [Turkish: *Avrupa Türk Demokratlar Birliği*, UID or UETD])[149] was able to visit the ballot committees (Gurbetin Oyları, 2015a).

(3) The 2014 presidential election already made it evident that the AKP's extraterritorial reach was more potent than the other parties. However, with the legislative elections, the differences in the parties' out-of-country reach hit a peak and made this party the main target of the concerns. The argument favouring this long-lived problematic vote-counting method was the unprepared technological infrastructure underlined by the Supreme Electoral Council. Yet it is known that the AKP was the mastermind behind this decision. With Turkey's first externally held general election experience in June 2015, the concerns were raised not only by the opposition parties but also by other non-partisan groups, including the Turkish Expat Voters. These vocalised critiques targeted the decision that required ballots to be transferred to Ankara instead of being counted in the polling stations, and derived mainly from the pro-AKP government servants' involvement throughout the electoral process.

Most of the polling stations were set at the Turkish consulates and embassies. However, there were cases where other designated places were rented for the electoral period (e.g., Turkish-Islamic Union for Religious Affairs [DITIB] mosques in Strasbourg and fair venues in Essen). Either way, due to the lengthy voting period of Germany and France, the cast votes were stamped and locked at the polling station at the end of each election day. The locked rooms had three keys that were given to the three of the five balloting committee members: one key was

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[148] Author's participant observations (see Appendix 4) and the media reports, such as Hamsici (2015, May 18).

[149] "The UID was established with then-President Erdoğan's sponsorship in 2004 in Cologne. Today the foundation has 36 branches throughout Western Europe, 16 of which are in Germany, including the headquarters in Cologne", and it is accepted as the AKP's lobbying unit in Europe (Yener-Roderburg, 2020, p. 225).

given to the government employee (which could be the consul, the imam, or another servant of the diplomatic mission), and the other two were given to the willing representatives of the three most voted political parties according to the last election held: the AKP, CHP, and MHP.[150] The two official members of the balloting committees consisted of government employees. The imams and other employees of the DITIB mosques are classified as Turkish civil servants who receive their training in Turkey and get paid by the Turkish government.[151] And due to over 1200 active mosques in Germany and France in total, the need for a government employee at the ballot boxes was primarily met by fielding these imams at the polling stations. However, the pro-AKP stance of the DITIB was clear, especially during electoral periods, which had reached their peak and were known to the public. Therefore, having DITIB employees as balloting committee members and an additional AKP representative as the committee member who holds the keys generated a great deal of concern about the ballot security, and the concern carried to a higher authority. A spare key scandal of Bern, Switzerland, showed that the locked rooms were not as secure as the Supreme Electoral Council claimed (Hamsici, 2015, May 18).

3.2.2.3. April 2017 Constitutional Referendum

Turkey's next external voting experience was the Constitutional Referendum in April 2017. This referendum was held on whether to approve 18 proposed amendments to the Turkish constitution, granting more power to the president which resulted in the favour of the new Constitution (see Figure 16).

Figure 16. Turkish constitutional referendum, April 2017

	Votes	**%**
Yes	25,157,463	51.41
No	23,779,141	48.59

Source: YSK (2020)

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[150] As a legal requirement, the number of the balloting committee members shall be no less than four (two government employees and two-party representatives). In the case of the absence of a balloting committee member or members, the right to be a representative is given to the parties that have their representatives available at the polling station (from the most voted to the least).

[151] For detailed information on DITIB, see Chapter II.

An enacted administrative provision in 2008 prohibits election campaigning outside Turkey.[152] The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) noted that most of the major political parties violated the rule for the June 2015 and November 2015 elections. In February 2017, the decision expanded and confirmed that propaganda abroad or at the border crossing was not permitted, yet no criminal liability is attached to the provision, which left it as a "moral obligation". Thus, political parties, particularly the AKP, had a great deal of struggle with European countries, especially Germany, over bans on rallies in several cities based on this Turkish law during the referendum campaigns.

This referendum's major change to the external voters was enabling them to vote at any external polling station (see Table 6). This change and the other non-legislative influences brought about further progress in the external voting participation rate: 44.60 percent (with customs gate votes in total 47.91 percent [see Figure 2]).

Even though the available data on the number of ballots cast abroad does not make it possible to see the exact number of non-resident voters who cast their votes someplace other than their initial registered electoral roll, after this major change in the implementation of external voting, it is believed that thousands of out-of-country voters made use of this new right.

As previously mentioned, the polling stations are not evenly distributed geographically. Therefore, for a remarkable number of expats, casting their votes at the nearest polling station is only possible by voting at a polling station outside their country of residence. This situation is particularly common for the central European countries. By becoming a polling station for the first time for the referendum, Luxembourg highlighted the efficacy of the regulation that enabled voting at any polling place (see Sample 2). Despite having only 571 registered voters on its electoral roll, 9,629 non-resident Turkish nationals cast their votes in Luxembourg in the referendum. Many out-of-country voters living in the neighbouring countries (Germany, France, and Belgium) boosted Luxembourg's participation rate; this situation was logistically found plausible.

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[152] 298 sayılı Seçim Yasasında 2008 – 94/A.

As Table 5 shows, even though there was a slight decrease in the number of voters residing in France compared to the previous election, most likely this is not because the interest has diminished in France, but because the polling stations situated not only in Luxembourg but also in Brussels, Geneva, and Bern are geographically closer to some regions in France than the polling stations that were set in France. Another example comes from Sweden. Citizens who reside in Malmö, Sweden, also favoured voting in Copenhagen, the capital city of Denmark, which is 40 kilometres from Malmö, instead of travelling 600 km to Stockholm, a polling station in their country of residence. Copenhagen's participation rate has experienced a drastic increase from 33.95 percent in November 2015 to 47.1 percent in April 2017, which could partially stem from the voter influx from Sweden.

Problems emerged in relation to the implementation

The issues of transparency and, accordingly, the safety of the ballots were still raised for both elections. However, for both of the legislative elections that were held in June and November 2015, the main problems put forward were (1) malfunctioning authorised bodies and (2) negligent officers in charge.

In-country, the campaign environment, particularly for the April 2017 Referendum, did not provide an equal standard to the ruling party and other contestants. Turkey had been under a strict state of emergency since July 20, 2016, followed by a failed coup attempt on July 15 of that year. Dozens of HDP members, including MPs, were jailed, and a significant number of journalists and a number of media institutions had been shuttered. Thus, opposition parties who were rallying for "no" to the referendum on expanding the president's powers were in a struggle to organise rallies and denied a fair distribution of airtime on the state-run broadcaster (TRT) and other private channels. Contrary law requires media to provide advertising under similar conditions. In addition, the imbalances and violations were reported to the Radio and Television Supreme Council (Turkish: *Radyo ve Televizyon Üst Kurulu*, RTUK or RTSC), yet no convenient result was obtained from the complaints made, which underlined that the approach of the RTSC is not independent.

Out-of-country the campaign environment was also favouring the incumbent party AKP. Despite the propaganda ban abroad, thousands of Turkish voters in Germany received personal letters

prior to the electoral period by then-Prime Minister of Turkey from AKP, Binali Yıldırım, in which AKP's achievements were listed and asked voters to go to the ballot boxes and vote for "yes". Some Turkish citizens reached German authorities filed complaints about the personal data breaches by the Turkish state (Topçu, 2017, April 8).

In addition to the undemocratic campaign environment, the April 2017 Referendum created a post-election tension when "yes" won over a debatable vote count between the "yes" and "no" electorates. The Supreme Election Council changed the rule that allows half a million unstamped ballot papers involved in the electoral process after polls had opened, contradicting the law and ballot validity criteria and undermining an important safeguard. The recount demand of the main opposition party was denied despite the difference between yes and no votes being less than the number of questioned ballot papers: 1,378,332. Among the non-resident "no" voters, the trust in the Council was lessened. Turkish nationals in many countries protested against the Supreme Election Council's final say. This situation suggested the possibility of reduced extraterritorial turnout for future elections.

To enhance the overall understanding of the electoral process, the Supreme Election Council fell behind in providing timely enough information about registration to the electoral poll, aspects of the elections, and voting procedures. Another significant peculiarity that came up during the April 2017 Referendum and the overall hardship of expats in accessing reliable core knowledge was the absence of the question on the ballot papers. A ballot paper, principally, is expected to explain what is voted and why it is voted. However, before being directed to the voting booth, expatriates and resident nationals were given a ballot paper consisting of a divided display where each option (yes and no) had equal shares and a stamp. By being non-resident, these citizens lack access to necessary information, and they were disadvantaged for a second time by not being provided the essential information at the polling station. The Presidency of Turks Abroad and Related Communities (Turkish: *T.C. Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı Yurtdışı Türkler ve Akraba Topluluklar Başkanlığı*, formarly known as *T.C. Başbakanlık Yurtdışı Türkler ve Akraba Topluluklar Başkanlığı*, YTB),[153] for example, is also responsible for informing citizens abroad about elections. Although before and throughout the referendum, YTB used its social media

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[153] The YTB, which functions under the Ministry of Culture and Tourism and was established in 2010, "has the task to coordinate the activities for Turks living abroad, related (sister) communities" (YTB, 2021).

accounts particularly Facebook highly effectively to promote voting among expats, there was no single statement given by YTB on why precisely the referendum was going to be held.

Therefore, the April 2017 Referendum did not provide the necessary lawful, fair, and impartial environment to the resident voters, which generated mistrust among a considerable number of Turkish nationals living abroad, which could have brought about a lower turnout than the actual eventuality.

Legislative changes following the April 2017 Constitutional Referendum

The most significant change made after the referendum was the introduction of the law that enabled out-of-country citizens to vote at any external polling station other than the one they are registered to (see Tables 3 and 6).

3.3. Concluding remarks

The method of casting a ballot at the border crossings offered to non-resident Turkish citizens between 1987 and 2011 was an unpractical and not realistically inclusive one considering the low turnouts experienced for seven elections that stretched over two decades. Therefore, in this respect, enabling non-resident voters to participate in home country elections from their country of residence, which in a short period increased the turnout rate from 5 percent to over 50 percent, can be considered as a more effective and positive attempt to include non-resident eligible voters in the homeland electoral process realistically.

As mentioned, the concern of the opposition parties and non-partisan groups concerning emigrant voting started when the technical characteristics of the voting procedure showed a clear lack of transparency, dating back to 1987 with the techniques for ballot counting. The most common problems, in addition to the vote-counting, involve ballot security, which was in the hands of the satellite units of the AKP; to this day, the procedures remain crude and cause a number of issues raised from all around the world.

Nevertheless, the problematic issues raised against the voting procedures, despite not being resolved, did not affect the participation rate for the subsequent elections, at least to this day. On

the other hand, the Portuguese case shows that several cases of illegal practices in the 1976 legislative election were reflected at the ballot box in the following election. As a result, the Portuguese emigrant participation dropped to 26.5 percent in 1982 from 82 percent in 1976 (Lisi et al., 2015, p. 276). In contrast, the Turkish emigrants' participation rate has increased from 8.37 percent in 2014 to 32.5 percent in June 2015 and 44.7 in 2018 (see Figure 2).[154] However, the high turnout rate is in the political culture of the Turkish citizens, and belongs neither to non-resident eligible citizens nor to a specific period in time. Rustow (1991) states that although each and every election that took place in Turkey had cases of election fraud, "Turkish voting participation has been higher than in many European countries, and far higher than in the United States, reaching 89 percent in 1950 and averaging 76 percent for the 1950–1980 period" (p. 17).

Due to the lack of empirical studies, the grounds for the varying turnout patterns of the nationals in extraterritorial districts have yet to be clarified. However, the work at hand indicates that in the Turkish case, the higher turnouts do not necessarily stem from the reformed registration mechanisms, but from the impact of political and civil society actors in fostering voters' mobilisation in destination countries, which is, as stated, highly connected to already engaged citizens. Furthermore, with the vote-share success of the pro-Kurdish HDP, we observe that the nationals who cast their votes were also proportionately more in favour of the small parties compared to the in-country cast ballots (see Figure 1), which alone constitutes a credible case to demonstrate the impact as well as the significance of the diaspora grassroots, whether initiated by political or civil society.

The changes through the AKP rule have witnessed—like the parties CHP and DP which held the authority, respectively, between 1920 and the mid-1940s and from the mid-1940s to the early 1960s—the blurring of the line between the party and the state, where the media, bureaucracy and judiciary were vastly controlled, public resources were exploited, and the opposition parties were severely oppressed (Çınar, 2016; Lancaster, 2016; Özbudun, 2015). Thus, the AKP's launch in establishing its satellites abroad (e.g., DITIB and UID) a decade before enabling external voting, and the party's ignorance in finding solutions for the concerns raised about free

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[154] Votes cast in residence countries. Please see Figure 1 for the total votes cast by the non-resident registered voters.

and fair elections and the transparency on ballot security issues, were neither surprising nor unexpected (Yener-Roderburg, 2020, forthcoming; Umpierrez de Reguero et al., 2021).

On the other hand, opposition parties, especially the small ones, as has been underlined throughout this chapter, have always experienced difficulties in adapting as well as surviving within the Turkish political party scene. The HDP's electoral success abroad as a multi-ethnic and multi-religious party shows that such parties may have a less disadvantaged position in out-of-country election competition than in-country.

The following chapter of the dissertation will show how some of the diasporas' organisations were used as party satellites, while some have become party alliances in fostering voters' mobilisation in the Turkish legislative elections. Even though this second chapter will cover the reach of the Turkish political parties in the country cases of Germany and France, particular attention will be given to the HDP party sympathisers' homeland political party engagements.

Chapter II

Political Mobilisation of Turkey's Diasporas and Homeland Parties' Outreach: From Early Accounts to Present. The Case of the HDP in Germany and France

Diaspora organisations in destination countries of Turkish citizens, similar to organisations belonging to other diasporic communities around the world, mostly serve as safety nets for Turkey's diasporas. Furthermore, they act as intermediary organisations between the individuals or with the state and play a critical role in building the diasporic identity or serving the unique diasporas' prior needs. As Bruneau (2010, p. 40) states, various types of diasporas have inequality in their organisational structure. He divides them into four major domains: enterprise, religion, political, and racial and cultural poles (Bruneau, 2010, p. 40). Turkey's diasporas still fit within these major poles posited by Bruneau. However, like in the case of Turkey's diasporas, the unique shape of a diaspora organisation in a destination country changes, enlarges, or merges with the other diasporas' organisations for various reasons, temporarily or permanently, through longue durée. Particularly in cases where the influx of migrants is ongoing from the same sending country to the same destination country, with chain migration at first, circular migration becomes part of the lifestyle of the emigrants in the destination countries. The increased complexity between the diasporas' organisations lasts for generations, which invalidates the significance of the generational differentiation to a great extent (Akgönül, 2016; Poros, 2011). Therefore, despite the complexity of categorising diaspora organisations, it is essential to scrutinise the dynamism with which these organisations evolve over time.

There is a rich scholarship on Turkish migration towards Europe. And these studies, including the recent ones, mention the phases of Turkish emigration (Abadan-Unat, 2011; Aydın, 2016) and provide information ranging from the channels used initially to emigrate to the numbers of naturalised former Turkish citizens per year to understand and classify how the diasporas categorically differ from one another. This approach of categorising Turkish emigration, without a doubt, is highly significant to enhance our understanding of the 'whys' and 'hows' of the Turkish emigration and its evolution. Nevertheless, this approach is also misleading, because the

exceptions to these categories are high in number. For example, more than a few cases I encountered during my fieldwork confirmed that, independent of their ethnic background, some Turkey-originating migrants – and it is believed that their numbers reach the thousands – made use of 'the Kurdish card' and emigrated as political refugees when, in reality, they were economic migrants who were too late to be part of the guest worker programme which was halted in 1973.

Furthermore, on the 'naturalised Turks' point, a recent report from Germany revealed that there are believed to be around one million former Turkish citizens who tricked Germany's 'no dual citizenship' enactment by regaining their Turkish citizenship after being granted German citizenship (Statistisches Bundesamt Deutschland, 2020). Therefore, most of the available studies on the topic, due to unavailability of the relevant data from official Turkish channels, obtain their data from the host countries' official sources, which fail to grasp the actuality of a number of the naturalised nationals' citizenship status. Under these circumstances, it is hard to claim the attainable data that doubtfully represent the substantial number of Turkish nationals or former nationals and rely solely on the migration waves. The numbers belong to the different motivations (economic, family reunion, and political) that are still assumed to be the major determinants of the variation among the diasporas. In this respect, diaspora networks are usually considered the most plausible elements to describe the migrant communities in receiving countries (Faist, 1998).

This study's field consists of mixed groups based on criteria of nation-states (Turkish citizens, former Turkish citizens, and their descendants), ethnic groups (Turks, Kurds, Yezidis, Assyrians, Armenians, etc.), religious groups (Sunnis, Alevis, etc.), region (going as local as the villages from which the migrants come), and political orientation (left-wing, right-wing, nationalist, and so on). This situation shows that each criterion comes as an individual's identity and demonstrates the hardships of studying migrant mobilisation through small-scale groupings. Therefore, migrant organisations appear as the most suitable analysis for this research. In addition to this, investigating migration organisations, where the diasporas come into existence, offers a unique opportunity to look into the rapid changes in the formation of networks and transnational social spaces and the motivations of the diaspora members during a game-changing

event, such as enfranchisement of the non-resident voters, whether originating from the home country, the host country, or both.

While the available studies on the Turkey-originating migrant groups show problems when they are too focused on the migration waves to be able to comprehend how the political mobilisation of the diasporas has evolved, the evolution of the diaspora organisations is still most suitably examined from the perspective of the migrant organisations and their change throughout migration waves, and responses to the political tensions originating in the home country. Diaspora networks are usually considered the most plausible elements to describe the migrant communities in receiving countries (Faist, 1998), which makes diaspora organisations the appropriate focus and the unit of analysis when we talk about diasporas' mobilisations. Furthermore, tracing the diasporas through their organisations and their organisational features over time offers several advantages. (1) This approach accepts the evolution of the diasporas in destination countries; therefore, it does not see diasporas as static one-dimensional migrant networks through transnational social spaces consisting of only two phases (see Faist, 2001). (2) It helps us avoid counting dormant migrant populations among the people who would not want to remain dormant, which also liberates us from the many studies that lead us (over time) to biased and invalid categorisation. (3) It assists in preventing us from falling into the trap of statistical information on the migration categories (e.g., economic or political), which, as illustrated above, creates misleading assumptions. (4) Recalling Sökefeld (2006), "organisations are frequently significant actors within movements [mobilisation] and can give them a temporal continuity that exceeds the commitment of individual actors" (p. 269), which would also credit the diaspora organisations' capacity as the source of the political mobilisation themselves, rather than the target of the homeland political parties (Koinova & Tsourapas, 2018).

Diaspora mobilisations that have been analysed extensively for their engagements in trajectories of homeland-originating political parties, despite some attempts (Camatarri, 2021; Fliess, 2021; Gamlen, 2014a; Paarlberg, 2020; Umpierrez de Reguero et al., 2021), have not been comprehensively combined with external voting. In most of the political party studies that focus on their overseas functioning, "diaspora organisations" are seen as the target of the homeland political parties (Fliess, 2021; Koinova & Tsourapas, 2018), dismissing the possibility that some migrants and refugees from their prospective countries may be keen builders of transnational

spaces of their own that are highly political. There is also growing literature connecting the migrant associations to the homeland parties that has started to consider the migrant organisations as a unit of analysis (e.g., Fliess, 2021; Paarlberg, 2020; Yener-Roderburg, 2020).

In light of this background, this chapter, by keeping Bruneau's (2010, p. 40) four-pole types of diasporas in mind – the enterprise, religion, political, and racial and cultural poles – will scrutinise the evolution of the diasporas of Turkey in Germany and France and the changes in their orientation poles, if any, in relation to their future homeland political party affiliation following the grant of external enfranchisement for the Turkish citizens. Furthermore, as the rationale of the study underlined in Chapter I, special attention will be given to marginalised diaspora organisations that are self-motivated in their political orientation, which was a pro-HDP[155] stance, and that mobilise for this homeland political party in the country cases of this study, Germany and France, with different levels of interest.

Thus, to be able to understand the political mobilisation of the diasporas that evolved in favour of a homeland political party, the Peoples' Democratic Party (Turkish: *Halkların Demokratik Partisi*, HDP), the first part of this chapter will briefly explore Germany and France as receiving countries in respect to their approach to migrants in general and Turkey-originating migrants in particular. Furthermore, variations concerning these countries' approaches to citizenship will be examined, as well as the advantages and disadvantages that these established democracies provide to politically vocal migrant groups. Moreover, Turkey's legal enactments provided to its citizens and former citizens in response to these countries' new law enactments will be described to draw a better picture of the legal capacities of Turkish nationals and former nationals within their resident countries.

The first section of the second part of the chapter will briefly explore non-HDP-affiliated Turkey-originating diasporas and the mobilisation of Turkey's political parties in Germany and France through diasporas' organisations associated with other parties. In the second section, pro-HDP diasporas' organisations will be evaluated that stem from Turkey's political developments and how these organisations acquired a political stance favouring the HDP in Germany and France. To serve the purpose of this work, the three different kinds of level of interest

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[155] The emergence of the HDP and its mobilisation abroad will be detailed later in this Chapter and in Chapter III.

organisations that are also the most influential in mobilising HDP supporters will be examined. These are workers' unions, religious organisations, and ethnic organisations through, respectively, the Federation of Democratic Workers' Associations (Turkish: *Demokratik İşçi Dernekleri Federasyonu*, DIDF) in Germany and the Federation of Democratic Workers' and Youth' Associations (Turkish: *Demokratik İşçi Dernekleri Federasyonu*, DIDF-France) France; the Alevi Federation in Germany (German: *Alevitische Gemeinde Deutschland*, AABF), and the Federation of Alevi Unions in France (French: *Fédération Union des Alévis en France*, FUAF); and the Democratic Social Centre of the Kurds in Germany (Kurdish: *Navenda Civaka Demokratîk ya Kurdên li Almanyayê*, NAV-DEM) and the Kurdish Democratic Council in France (French: *Conseil Démocratique kurde en France*, CDK-F). Firstly, each of these diaspora organisations will be explained with reference to the transformations that these organisations went through regarding their mobilisation capacity in parallel to the relevant agenda changes in Turkey as well as in the country cases. Furthermore, I will point out the pre-external voting period, including a timeline from the early political predispositions of these organisations until the Turkish external enfranchisement period (2012), and I will underline how these organisations acted after external enfranchisement as HDP supporters (2012–2018). Lastly, the discussion of each organisation will conclude with a comparison between the resident countries, but also an expression of the interconnectedness of the translocal[156] associations in Germany and France, and briefly at the European level.

1. Migration profile of Germany and France, and the positioning of the Turkey-originating diasporas' organisations in these countries

As emphasised in the introduction chapter, migration is usually a combination of continual exchanges between geographically distant communities, circulation in the migratory field, and territorial continuity (Ma Mung, 2004). As Ma Mung (2004) notes, using the example of the Chinese diaspora, this situation puts migrants and their descendants in a position in which they consist of "local communities connected by various relationships and flows of migrants, of information, of wealth, and so on" (p. 212). Despite the fact that the connections of the local

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[156] This study uses Eric Kit-wai Ma's (2002) definition of 'translocal', which is "the mobility, sociality and productivity of a specific form of spatial practice – a transborder yet localized spatiality" (p. 132).

migrant communities of the same origin country can mostly be perceived as autogenous, such connections still largely depend on the opportunities that the country of destination would offer. When the destination counties are established democracies, the migrant communities may find more of a liberal ground in which they can be more present than in their former resident countries (e.g., politically motivated migrants). Besides the Kurds (Østergaard-Nielsen, 2000) and Alevis in Western Europe (Sökefeld, 2008), communities such as the Tamil diaspora in Canada (Wayland, 2004), the Tibetan diaspora in the United States (Yeh, 2007), Bolivian and Ecuadorians in Spain (Fliess, 2021), and the Mexicans in Belgium (Lara Guerrero, 2018) are significant examples showing that political diasporas most likely pursue political goals for their homeland transnationally when the suitable conditions are provided.

When the same destination countries also attract economic migrants, then the increase in diversity among the migrant groups originating from the same sending countries becomes unavoidable. This situation brings the already existing tensions between various groups along with the migrants to the destination countries. It creates complex diasporas in destination countries, like the South Asian diasporas in Britain (Werbner, 2004) and the diasporas from Turkey in Western Europe. However, the destination countries, even if they are established democracies, do not necessarily only offer greater living conditions due to the politics of immigration, nor do they all offer better environments for more free political activities for the political refugees in order not to risk the diplomatic relationships with the sending countries, as in the case of Sino-Turkish relations and the Uyghur diaspora in Turkey (Shichor, 2018). The migrant communities in these countries may also need to confront by the issues of social integration models, may have recognition problems with their presence, may face discrimination (Ma Mung, 2004, p. 212), may face challenges with bureaucracy due to being overlooked and insufficiently informed as a result of insufficient integration policies (Constant et al., 2009; Fibbi et al., 2006), and so on.

The world faces highly mobile migration waves as well as challenges from a global forced displacement that is growing exponentially. In 2019 alone, "1 percent of humanity [was] displaced" (UNHCR, 2019). Refugees and migrants have essentially, for more than a couple of decades, become contested issues in Western European countries. Not on the legal framework of the refugee issue, but when it comes to managing the migrants, each nation has its own way of

approaching this matter despite being part of the EU. Even though displaced people move to neighbouring countries as the first option, the destination is Europe for most of those individuals. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees' (UNHCR) annual Global Trends report of 2019, Germany and France are the world's third- and fourth-largest refugee[157] recipient nations (UNHCR, 2019, p. 2). This situation was not any different in the past, which has evolved both country cases in the same direction from 1951. Under the refugee law that countries including Germany and France accept in accordance with the 1951 Geneva Refugee Convention (UNHCR, 1992), refugees are individuals who are given refugee protection once their asylum proceedings have been completed, unlike what the oft-used description suggests.[158] As is stated, to be able to be granted refugee status, the asylum seekers' proceedings need to be completed in Germany[159] or France. Yet asylum is a right, granted to those who flee political persecution penetrated by the state.[160]

Brubaker (1990, 1992, 2001, 2003), in his intensive works on immigration, citizenship, and nationhood in France and Germany, rightfully underlined the differences of these nations starting from 1990, in which France is depicted as "state-centred and assimilationist" while Germany is perceived as "ethnocultural and 'differential'" (1990, p. 379), and France is more liberal than Germany in its migration policies including naturalisation and citizenship acquisition (1992: X). Nevertheless, the findings on the diaspora organisations throughout the fieldwork, despite the critical differences in the migrant and citizenship definitions and regulations of both countries, show that there has been little to no difference in the way Turkey-originating migrant organisations function in each country, their impact on their communities in general, and their impact on the diaspora members' political mobilisation.

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[157] The term 'refugee' in everyday language is considered a synonym for migrants who search for asylum through fleeing across state borders in order to escape violence because their life, bodily integrity, rights, and freedoms are either directly threatened or can, with certainty, be expected to be threatened.

[158] For more details on the topic see the following link: https://www.bamf.de/SharedDocs/Anlagen/EN/AsylFluechtlingsschutz/Asylverfahren/das-deutsche-asylverfahren.pdf?__blob=publicationFile&v=12

[159] But even before the Convention was signed in 1951, Germany officially recognised refugees in 1949, and the right to asylum is protected in article 16a of the German basic law. Grundgesetz für die Bundesrepublik Deutschland [Grundgesetz] [GG] [Basic Law], May 23, 1949, Bundesgesetzblatt [BGBl.] [Federal Law Gazette] I at 1, art. 16a.

[160] Bundesverfassungsgericht [BVerfG] [Decisions of the Federal Constitutional Court] 315, 334.

Diaspora organisations in destination countries of Turkish citizens, former citizens, or their descendants, similar to organisations belonging to other diasporic communities around the world for decades, mostly serve as safety nets for the members of the diasporas that shape the connections between these groups (Chaudhary & Guarnizo, 2020; Mügge, 2012; Odmalm, 2012; Orozco & Lapointe, 2004; Safrai & Stern, 1974). They act as intermediary organisations between the individuals or with the resident country and play a critical role in building an identity that prioritises the unique diasporas. As Ghorashi (2004) states, "developing and sustaining transnational contacts with one's 'own group' around the world and within the country of origin is an essential factor in re-creating the past in the present" (pp. 330–331), which Ma Mung (2004) supports by underlining that the diaspora communities' presence "in a given place becomes indebted to the diaspora" because, for these members of the diaspora, their presence "is part of their identity as members of the diaspora" (p. 212). The diaspora organisations are the visible parts of the diaspora identities in the receiving countries.

According to Bruneau (2010), the "diaspora areas and territories must be assessed in steps", and the first step is "the host country, where the community bond plays the essential role"; then, through memory, "the country or territory of origin" as a pole of attraction emerges; and lastly, the first two poles are connected "through the system of relations within the networked space" (p. 36). In other words, the host countries – which I call receiving or resident countries in this study – play a critical role for diasporas to expand territorially since the places of memory and places of presence need to merge (Offner & Pumain, 1996, p. 163). Thus, in this first part of the second chapter, I will initially elucidate the migration profiles of the country cases of this study, Germany and France, from two perspectives: (1) the migration trends towards these countries and the effects of migration policies that have been implemented on population statistics; (2) these country cases' politics of citizenship concerning migrants.

1.1. Overview on migration trends and migration policy in Germany and France

In this section, in light of the concepts mentioned above, the country cases will be detailed regarding their migration background in general, and statistically significant data in relation to their Turkey-originating population since the early migration waves launched towards Germany and France.

Following the Second World War, Germany's economic recovery by the mid-1950s necessitated a labour force. To offset labour shortages, the federal government turned its direction to the countries from which Germany could temporarily recruit its labour force. As a result, the "Agreement on the Recruitment and Placement of Workers" (German: *Abkommen über Anwerbung und Vermittlung von Arbeitskräften*) was first signed with Italy in 1955 to bring temporary workers who were then called "guest workers" (German: *Gastarbeiter*). Subsequently, the same agreement was signed with Greece and Spain (1960), Turkey (1961), Morocco (1963), Portugal (1964), Tunisia (1965) and Yugoslavia (1968) (Aktürk, 2012, p. 47). Unlike what was initially expected, guest workers became permanent residents in Germany. This turnover can be observed as the historical point at which Germany became an immigration country, although this was not recognized by the authorities at the time, who continued to see it as a "recruiting country" despite the increasing resident migrant population as part of Germany's solid structure. In 2005, it was finally admitted that Germany had become an "immigration country" (Chin, 2007).

The initial aim of the migration policy that introduced the guest worker agreement during the 1950s and 1960s was a "rotation principle". These workers were expected to reside in Germany for a fixed period and return to their countries of origin (Chin, 2007, p. 3). Although these 'permanent' stays were clear to the authorities by the early 1970s, permanent residence was not intended for non-citizens (Schneider & Kreienbrink, 2010). However, in 1973, the bilateral agreement with Turkey was not renewed by Germany due to the worldwide recession that stemmed from the oil crisis in 1973[161] and the baby boomers, born between 1945 and 1955, who joined the labour force in the 1970s. Following that, migration flows due to family reunification (from 1973 on) and forced migration of suppressed groups from Turkey, particularly leftist groups (from 1980 on), have become the major source of Turkey-originating migration waves towards Germany.

On December 1, 1983, the "Return Assistance Act" (German: *Rückkehrhilfegesetz*)[162] was put in effect to financially assist foreign workers who had come as guest workers from a country

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[161] Statistisches Bundesamt, DATENREPORT 46 (1999) can be reached via the following lnik: https://www.destatis.de/DE/Publikationen/Datenreport/Downloads/Datenreport1999.pdf?__blob=publicationFile

[162] The return assistance was determined as 10,500 Deutsche Mark, to be given under certain requirements such as "the guest workers could not be married to a German citizen; lost his or her job because the business or the

outside of the European Economic Community to go back to their countries of origin permanently (Rückkehrhilfegesetz [RückHG], 1983). This Act was largely definite for 1983, and in 1984 resulted in a drop in Germany's total number of foreigners (Schneider & Kreienbrink, 2010, p. 45). However, according to Triadafilopoulos (2012), no measurable difference was observed in the number of returnees in 1983 and 1984 compared to the previous years. According to Abadan-Unat (2011, p. 22), however, around a quarter million Turkish citizens returned to Turkey, resulting in a more than 5 percent drop among the Turkey-originating population. Most of the younger foreign workers instead stayed in Germany and were joined by their families, and their temporary stay has become a permanent one (Mehrlander, 1987). Besides the family members of Turkish emigrants, Germany also became a destination for irregular migrants from Turkey, who entered illegally or overstayed tourist visas, in some cases working in the informal sector. Some of these irregular immigrants gained legal status through either asylum applications or marriage. By 2002, two-thirds of the total Turkish citizens in Germany were those who immigrated to Germany under family reunification visas and children born in Germany (Anil, 2007). Therefore, it was not surprising that the Act on Foreigners of 1965 and the Act on Foreigners of 1990 have remained as the only acts that regulated these foreign populations' entries and residence status (Gesley, 2017), and that, rather than facilitating the residency conditions, they aimed to harden the acquisition of permanent residence and to deport unemployed foreigners. Thus, the "citizenship" acquisition of the foreign workers and their family members, including their children born in Germany, was not mentioned in either of the Acts until the late 1990s (citizenship in Germany will be discussed below in section 1.2.).

The above-mentioned bilateral agreement between Germany and Turkey in 1961 gave a start to the vast number of migrations from Turkey to Germany, which made Germany, to this day, the first migration destination country for Turkish citizens, whether economically, for family reunification, politically motivated, or all of the above. The year 2021 has marked the 60th

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main components of the business had been shut down or had gone bankrupt; had applied for return assistance by June 30, 1984; had been legally residing in Germany until the date of departure; and had permanently left Germany with his or her family between October 30, 1983, and September 30, 1984" (RückHG, 1983: § 1). As a way to encourage the permanent return migration if an eligible guest worker did not leave until after January 1, 1984, the amount of the return assistance would be reduced by 1,500 Deutsche Mark for every additional month. Furthermore, no return assistance would be offered after seven months from the designated date (RückHG, 1983: § 2, para. 2). "The Return Assistance Act of 1983 is still in effect today in which foreign nationals can make legal claims to 'comprehensive return counselling'" (Schneider & Kreienbrink, 2010, p. 45).

anniversary of the recruitment of 'guest workers', whose numbers have been drastically increasing with the influx of the family members of the first comers, and other migration waves stemmed from economic as well as political turmoil taking place in Turkey. While the number of Turkish citizens in 1961 was 5,700 (1.0 percent of the total foreign population in Germany), by 1999, before citizenship acquisition was enabled for the foreigners in 2000, it reached 2,053,600 (8.9 percent of the total foreign population in Germany) (Abadan-Unat, 2011, p. 8). From 2000 onwards, the number of Turkish citizens in Germany started declining, yet the number of those with Turkish origin (with the calculation of people with migration backgrounds) kept increasing (Abadan-Unat, 2011, p. 8).

According to the Federal Statistical Office of Germany 2019 report, among those living in private households, 21.3 million (26 percent) have a migration background, out of which 14.3 percent were born in Germany.[163] In 2000 the population of Turkey was 67,845,000, and Turkish citizens living in Germany made up 2.95 percent of that, reaching 1,998,500. According to the 2018 data of the Federal Statistical Office of Germany, there are 1,476,410 Turkish citizens in Germany, making 1.8 percent of the total population of Germany (82,003,882) (Statistisches Bundesamt Deutschland, 2019, p. 47).

As will be detailed in the following section, German citizenship is hard to acquire but sometimes not even preferred by the first-generation migrants[164] at the expense of their Turkish citizenship. This situation also increases what Gutierrez (2007) calls "mixed-status" households (p. 98). Relying on the fieldwork of this study, even among family members, their legal status to the resident country changes, varying from naturalised citizens to permanent residents or even to undocumented migrants, most of the time following a rejection of refugee status. This situation signifies two important points from supply (the German government) and demand (people with migration background) sides.

(1) In the eyes of the German authorities, these people, despite their mixed legal status, are seen as people with a 'migration background' (German: *Migrationshintergrund*). For Germany, a

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[163] For more on the demographic information see the following link:
https://www.destatis.de/DE/Presse/Pressemitteilungen/2020/07/PD20_279_12511.html

[164] First generation in this study refers to the group who are foreign born to parents neither of whom was a resident country citizen.

person born in another country and his/her/their descendants, whether or not they are German citizens, are considered to have a migration background as an official category.[165] According to German law, "A person has a migration background if they themselves or at least one parent was not born with German citizenship".[166] This definition includes the following individuals: 1. immigrants and non-immigrants; 2. immigrated and non-immigrated naturalised persons; 3. (late) emigrants; 4. descendants of German citizenship born in the three groups mentioned above. Furthermore, it is enough to have one of the parents born outside of Germany to be categorised under "migration background" data.

Although the term dates back only to 2007, by being brought by the German Federal Statistical Office and made use of in any relevant information (for instance, broadcasts mention when a person with a migration background commits crimes), the concept of "migration background" has an exclusionary annotation "with regard to 15% of all Germans and half of all 'persons with a migration background'" (Will, 2019, p. 553), underlying that, independent of holding German citizenship, these people are represented as not being part of the general population.

(2) Considering families and communities with a migration background, the legal status of persons with a migration background does not necessarily mean any lesser or greater attachment to the resident country. Therefore, by looking at these two points, it is not hard to state that the official authorisation of the German nation makes status distinction even among its citizens via "inherited citizenship" (independent of citizenship acquisition) by valuing German descent higher than others through the emphasis on the "migration background" concept (Will, 2019, p. 553). This situation also resonates and shows parallelism with the reluctance to acquire German citizenship, particularly among first-generation migrants (which will be detailed below), and

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[165] For the original description of 'migration background' in German see the following link: https://www.destatis.de/DE/Themen/Gesellschaft-Umwelt/Bevoelkerung/Migration-Integration/Glossar/migrationshintergrund.html#:~:text=Eine%20Person%20hat%20einen%20Migrationshintergrund,mit%20deutscher%20Staatsangeh%C3%B6rigkeit%20geboren%20wurde.

[166] But before 2017, this was slightly different: the 2011 census defines all immigrants as immigrants and non-immigrants as well as all Germans who immigrated to the present territory of the Federal Republic of Germany after 1955 and all Germans with at least one parent who immigrated to the present territory of the Federal Republic of Germany after 1955.

For more on the original description of "migration background" in German see the following link: https://www.bamf.de/DE/Service/ServiceCenter/Glossar/_functions/glossar.html?cms_lv2=282966&cms_lv3=294952

leads to various legal membership forms such as citizenship and permanent residency to the German state.

According to the latest data that the Federal Statistical Office of Germany released in 2020, Turkish citizens number 1,461,910. By making up 12.4 percent of the total foreign population, this situates itself as the largest foreign population in Germany.[167]

France, unlike Germany, has always been an immigrant country (Noiriel, 1988) due to the French colonial past that created a passage between France and its colonies in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The first census that had foreign population dates to 1851 (Hamilton et al., 2004). The first regulation of immigrants, however, was launched only after World War II.

Turkey's immigration history in France is rather short compared to the other immigrant communities that largely consisted of France's colonials, and it started for the same reason as Germany: to make up for the labour shortages following the world wars. The first bilateral agreement for labour recruitment between Turkey and France was signed a couple of years after the agreement with Germany in 1965. Before the agreement, it is believed that during the mid-1950s, there were around 5,000 Turkish citizens already living in France (Yagmur & Akinci, 2003). Yet the high numbers of economically motivated Turkey-originating migrants started going to France only during the early 1970s as their second choice for a destination country following Germany. After that, however, France, like Germany, also put a halt to the labour migration programmes. And, once more, like in Germany and many other European counterparts, the family reunifications beginning in the late 1970s and the politically motivated refugees beginning in the early 1980s increased the number of Turkey-originating immigrants by more than 200,000 (Yagmur & Akinci, 2003). At that time, the people with Turkish origin residing in France had already made this group the fourth-largest immigrant group, following Algerians, Tunisians, and Moroccans (Hamilton et al., 2004).

The level of education of the immigrants from Turkey to France followed a similar pattern to Germany throughout the first wave of labour recruitment in 1960s, which mostly consisted of

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[167] For more on the data of the Central Register of Foreigners of Germany see the following link: https://www.destatis.de/EN/Themes/Society-Environment/Population/Migration-Integration/Tables/foreigner-gender.html

unqualified labour from rural Turkey, mostly Anatolian heartlands (Umpierrez de Reguero et al., 2021).[168]

Unlike the extent of the concept of "migrant" or "migration background" in Germany, which "evokes questions about national membership, especially for persons who may feel German, but whose belonging to Germany is questioned by the official category" (Will, 2019, p. 553), in France "immigrant" is used to describe people who have migrated from other nations or who were born in France with at least one immigrant parent yet have not acquired French citizenship, and the term is not used as widely as it is in Germany.[169] This translates into 4.8 million people (or 7.1 percent of the total population) according to the National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies in 2019.[170] Thus, the Turkey-originating population comprises a great deal of the migrant population in both countries' "migrant" perception.

When it comes to asylum seekers and refugees in both countries, it is also observed that the Turkey-originating population is sizeable. As stated earlier, due to the Turkish political turmoil that started in the late 1970s on and continues to this day, the refugee politics of Germany and France did not have a drastic change but became more restrictive with the implemented additional reforms.[171] The number of asylum seekers who choose these countries, especially Germany, is proportionally getting higher. Since the most recent political disturbances stemmed mainly from the failed coup attempt of 2016, the Turkish government, under the rule of the AKP, has not been allowing oppositional voices (e.g., people affiliated with the Gülen Movement,[172]

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[168] France has attracted an intellectual class (including but not limited to writers and artists) from the current Turkish geography since the Ottoman Young Turks until today (Akgönül, 2020).

[169] For more on the original description of the "immigrant" of the National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies in French see the following link: https://www.insee.fr/en/metadonnees/definition/c1676

[170] For more on the demographic information see the following link: https://www.insee.fr/en/statistiques/2121531#

[171] The "Asylum Compromise" of Germany that was put into effect in 1992–1993 could be seen as one of the restrictive measurements. https://www.bpb.de/gesellschaft/migration/kurzdossiers/207671/asylum-law-refugee-policy-humanitarian-migration

[172] The Gulen Movement (Turkish: *Gülen Hareketi,* or *Hizmet Hareketi*) is an Islamic movement with a political object inspired by Fethullah Gülen. Since 2015 the Gulen Movement has been designated as a terrorist organisation by Turkey, called Fetullahist Terrorist Organisation (Turkish: *Fetullahçı Terör Örgütü,* FETÖ). For detailed analysis on Gulenists, and the Gulen Movement in Germany and France, see Balci (2018); for recent changes that could be well perceived as conflict between the AKP and Gulenists, see, and Martin (2020), Taş (2018), and Yavuz and Koç (2016).

any dissident voices, opposition media outlets). In 2018, around half of the asylum applications came from Turkish citizens, of which two-fifth of these applicants were granted some form of protection by the German government.[173] According to the Eurostat data of 2019, France is the third address for the asylum applications from Turkish citizens, following Germany and Greece. And for France, in the report presented by the Ministry of the Interior, Turkish citizens are listed as the fifth-largest groups of nationals (after Afghani, Bangladeshi, Pakistani, and Guinean) as applicants.[174]

1.2. Migrants' access to citizenship in Germany and France

This section will first build on the previous part in respect to how citizenship laws are implemented and reformed in Germany and France, emphasising Turkey-originating migrants and refugees, and their response to these changes. Secondly, the changes to Turkish citizenship law in response to that of the country cases will be pointed out.

In the most accepted sense, citizenship implies being a member of a political entity that binds the individuals to a country. It could also be perceived as an apparatus by which holding the legal citizenship status includes this person, while the absence excludes the very same person from the community.

Although granting citizenship varies from one nation-state to another, the most common ways of citizenship attribution are *jus soli* (citizenship through the place of birth) and *jus sanguinis* (citizenship through ethnic descent or belonging).[175] In the case of Germany and France, we observe conditional *jus soli* and *jus sanguinis*; the extent to which they apply to immigrants, in particular, will be detailed below. In addition, immigrants' citizenship acquisition can be possible through naturalisation, which usually necessitates several procedures that can be summed up as "ordinary naturalisation" (Bauböck et al., 2013). These requirements vary from

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[173] See the following link for more on the issue: https://www.infomigrants.net/en/post/14462/every-second-turkish-asylum-seeker-heads-to-germany

[174] Ministry of Interior, '*Chiffres clés – Les demandes d'asile*', available in French at: https://bit.ly/397TDpi.

[175] Since 2016, all countries offer the acquisition of citizenship at birth through *jus sanguinis* (GLOBALCIT, 2017; Honohan & Rougier, 2018).

minimum residency requirement, successful citizenship test, language knowledge of the host nation, civic responsibilities, job security, and being willing to renounce the former citizenship.

Marshall ([1949] 1973) identifies citizenship rights under three concepts: (1) civil rights: freedom of opinion and speech and equal protection under the law; (2) social rights: eligibility for social welfare programmes of the host country including but not limited to health care and unemployment benefits; and (3) political rights: the right to elect and be elected.

Below, the citizenship regulations of both country cases, Germany and France, will be observed with a specific emphasis on the Turkey-originating migrant population.

In Germany, like in most EU member states, immigrants who are not citizens *de jure* possess the civil rights and some of the social rights yet are excluded from political rights. German citizenship acquisition was only through *jus sanguinis* until 2000 (Ehrkamp & Leitner, 2003; McFadden, 2019; Street, 2014). Since 2000, German citizenship acquisition for immigrants requires ordinary naturalisation procedures (Anil, 2007), including but not limited to eight years of residency, and denouncing the former nationality unless the individuals are nationals of another EU member state or Switzerland (BAMF, 2018, November 28). Between the late 1980s and early 1990s, over 400,000 were ethnic German immigrants referred to as "ethnic German resettlers" or "late *resettlers*" (German: *Spätaussiedlern*)[176] moved from Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union to Germany. These people, due to *jus sanguinis*, automatically became German citizens, whereas the early-arriving Turkey-originating communities who had, by that point, already spent over two decades in Germany and had extended families there with almost half a million new births, were not given the citizenship acquisition right until the first years of the 2000s (BMI [Federal Ministry of the Interior, Building and Community], 2020; Brubaker, 1992).

In the 1998 German national elections, the governing Gerhard Schröder and Joschka Fischer coalition of the Social Democratic Party (German: *Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands*, SPD) and the Greens (German: *die Grünen*) brought the topic of the citizenship law (German: *Staatsangehörigkeitsrecht)* to the agenda. And by 2000, 39 years after the first arrival of the first

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[176] The Federal Republic of Germany's Federal Expellees Act defines *ethnic German resettlers* as "who left the republics of the former Soviet Union after 31 December 1992 in the framework of an admission procedure and established their permanent residence in Germany within six months in line with applicable law" (BMI [Federal Ministry of the Interior, Building and Community], 2020).

migration wave of the vast number of Turkish citizens through a bilateral agreement, the new German citizenship policy made citizenship acquisition possible through naturalisation – in other words, a conditional *jus soli* to the millions of permanent 'guest workers' and their families (Ehrkamp & Leitner, 2003; Mignot, 2019). However, when it comes to the dual citizenship enactment, although the world trend concerning dual citizenship has progressed in recent decades,[177] it was never enabled by the German authorities for those having reached the full legal age. According to the current German legal enforcement, a non-citizen resident who is not an EU member state or Switzerland national and voluntarily demands German citizenship loses her/his previous citizenship. In the case of Turkish citizens, acquiring German citizenship would therefore take place at the expense of the Turkish citizenship, which is in the category of voluntary renunciation from one's citizenship. Moreover, since 2016, minor citizens who could obtain both citizenships are also obliged to decide between German nationality and the nationality of their parents once they reach the age of 21 (German: *Optionspflicht*, the requirement to choose between two nationalities) (BAMF, 2018, November 28).[178] According to the Microcensus data obtained in 2011, more than 530,000 had Turkish and German citizenship (Deutscher Bundestag, 2016, September 6). This last regulation on the dual citizenship issue was introduced by the Christian democratic, liberal-conservative parties the Christian Democratic Union of Germany (German: *Christlich Demokratische Union Deutschlands*, CDU) and the Christian Social Union in Bavaria (German: *Christlich-Soziale Union in Bayern*, CSU) in response to the tensions with the Turkish government. Then, however, the imprisonment of the German journalist of Turkish descent Deniz Yücel in Turkey put a halt to the dual citizenship discussions even though left-wing parties and migrant organisations objected to the decision.

Following the changes in the citizenship law that enabled citizenship acquisition through naturalisation, the naturalisation rates among the first generation during the early 2000s increased, which was interpreted as a success of this new law (Die Beauftragte der

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[177] See the Maastricht Centre for Citizenship, Migration and Development (MACIMIDE), Maastricht University data for more information: https://macimide.maastrichtuniversity.nl/dual-cit-database/

[178] Despite the mentioned final legal decision of 2016 on dual citizenship, the data on dual nationals in Germany is not obtainable. However, the Microcensus data of 2011 estimated that more than 4.2 million German citizens also have another citizenship, while this number has dropped to 1.6 million in 2015. Nevertheless, there are many critiques on the extend of the margin of error of the Microsensus calculations, and furthermore there have been states that no longer exists are not included in the 2015 estimations (Deutscher Bundestag, 2016, September 6).

Bundesregierung für Auslaenderfragen, 2001). In 2000, the number of former Turkish nationals was 82,861, around 44 percent of the total naturalised foreigners.[179] In every subsequent year, the number of naturalised former Turkish citizens dropped by about 10,000, stabilising at around 16,000 by 2016.[180] This situation could be safely interpreted as the 2000 Law causing proportionately fewer Turkish citizens to be eligible for the naturalisation process, which cannot be seen as a lessening interest of Turkish nationals in German citizenship. Compared to the other immigration countries such as France, the UK, Canada, or the USA, naturalisation rates in Germany are still low, despite recent increasing factors such as the Brexiters (Statistisches Bundesamt Deutschland, 2020; World Bank, 2021).[181]

As was noted in the above section on Migration, although Turkey-originating immigrant flow to Germany has lost the high volumes that it had during the 1960s or 1990s, Turkey is still one of the major immigrant-sending countries to Germany and the first nation in terms of naturalised nationals (Statistisches Bundesamt Deutschland, 2020).[182] Although studies show that the "immigrants from non-EU countries often acquire the citizenship more than twice as frequently as those from EU countries" (Bauböck et al., 2013, p. 23; see also Vink & Prokic-Breuer, 2013), the newcomers are expected "to retain close emotional ties to their homeland and do not wish to give up their native citizenship" (Ehrkamp & Leitner, 2003, p. 133). However, this situation could also be seen as parallel to the earlier mentioned German statistical category of "migration background", which excludes people of non-German origin from the general population and "evokes questions about national membership" (Will, 2019, p. 553). Thus, indirectly or directly,

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[179] Mügge (2012b) and Yanasmayan (2015) claim in their studies that having to lose Turkish citizenship is the main reason for choosing not to naturalise in the resident country. This deduction is valid for the Turkish-origin citizens of Turkey but not for those of Kurdish origin.

[180] Data on the naturalisation of foreigners: Germany, years, country groups/citizenship, age groups/sex/marital status can be found at the following link:
https://www-genesis.destatis.de/genesis/online?operation=abruftabelleBearbeiten&levelindex=1&levelid=1616451396878&auswahloperation=abruftabelleAuspraegungAuswaehlen&auswahlverzeichnis=ordnungsstruktur&auswahlziel=werteabruf&code=12511-0003&auswahltext=&nummer=5&variable=5&name=GES&nummer=7&variable=7&name=STAAG6&werteabruf=Value+retrieval#abreadcrumb

[181] Following the withdrawal decision of the UK from the EU, called Brexit, a record number of Britons who wished to remain a EU citizen became German citizens (Connolly, 2017, June 13).

[182] See Yanasmayan (2015) for the narratives of citizenship embraced by the Turkish migrants in Spain, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom.

the new generations that increase in number in Germany keep their bonds with their homeland, Turkey; this results in their reluctance to become citizens of the country they reside in, which pays off by not participating in the formal political process in that country. Because non-citizen residents independent of any other condition are exempt from the right to elect and be elected in any German elections, they therefore cannot take part in decision making at any level, national or regional.

French citizenship acquisition for immigrants has a more extended history than its German counterpart, going back as far as 1851. The 1851 citizenship law made ordinary naturalisation possible for third-generation immigrants; the 1889 legislation on citizenship, which enabled automatic citizenship for second-generation immigrants at the age of 16, is in force to this day despite a number of attempts and restrictive implementations put in place during the early 1990s by the governing coalition of Jacques Chirac's Rally for the Republic (French: *Rassemblement pour la République*, RPR) and Valéry Giscard d'Estaing's Union for French Democracy (French: *l'Union pour la démocratie française*, UDF) (Guiraudon, 2001),[183] with one major change that was implemented only in 2007.[184] The principle of double *jus soli*[185] (that a child born in France is French even if the parents themselves are not French citizens) is valid in France, facilitating the citizenship acquisition of the next generations. However, for those who were born elsewhere and immigrated to France, claiming French citizenship is only possible by naturalisation with certain conditions.[186] Like in the case of Germany, France also necessitates a residency requirement – five years, which is three years less than Germany. According to the 2012 census, 40 percent of the immigrants residing in France have acquired French citizenship, along with 95 percent of the descendants who by law are allowed to become French citizens when born in France (INED, 2012).

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[183] The Interior Minister Charles Pasqua led a policy of immigration in 1993 named after him, "Pasqua Law" with the aim of restricting legal migration flows with series of ways such as banning foreign qualified work force accepting job offers by French employers, extending family reunification, and refusing foreign spouses residence permits (Guiraudon, 2001).

[184] Article 21-11. The Article can be found at:
https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/codes/article_lc/LEGIARTI000006419871

[185] Double *jus soli* is known to have been applied in other empires/countries, such as the Ottoman Empire and Egypt (Mignot, 2019).

[186] For more on the citizenship acquisition conditions in France see the following link: https://www.service-public.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/F2213

Moreover, unlike Germany, France does not require individuals to give up their current citizenship to take French citizenship. In other words, dual nationality is permitted in France.[187] Dual citizenship holders consisted of 5 percent of the population in France a decade ago, yet this has been an increasing trend considering that France is one of the main immigrant-receiving countries in the world (INED, 2012). The same study also shows that 55 percent of Turkish immigrants had dual citizenship at that time. This right to hold both citizenships in France brings about another outcome in respect to Turkey-originating immigrants. According to the acquisition of the original citizenship of one or both parents, descendants of immigrants from Turkey have the strongest attachment among the immigrant populations in France, even though the Turkey-originating population is not the largest (Simon, 2010).

As is seen in the above section on migrants, the waves of Turkey-originating economic and political immigrant flow to France paralleled those to Germany. And Turkey-originating immigrants have also become one of the major groups that chose France as their residence country. According to the recent data, after the largest migrant groups of France (e.g., Moroccans and Algerians), Turkish nationals are the most in favour of acquiring French citizenship. France's approach to dual citizenship is more tolerant compared to Germany, as obtaining the citizenship of another country does not automatically renounce one's former citizenship. In other words, when it comes to the dual citizenship enactment, France and Germany differ drastically. While the former country case enables individuals to keep their former citizenship, the latter only grants the dual citizenship right for citizens of EU member states and the Swiss (BAMF, 2018, November 28). To illustrate, third-country nationals, like Turkish citizens, when eligible, are granted German nationality at the expense of their former citizenship, while, as noted, dual nationality is permitted in France.

All in all, as seen from this brief explanation, citizenship acquisition and naturalisation policies are more liberal in France than in Germany, and to this day, the rates of naturalisation have not changed: it is four to five times higher in France than it is in Germany, which, as expected, widens the gap between the second and third-generation migrants (Brubaker, 1992). However, the commonality of the cases here stems from Turkey-originating, particularly economic

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[187] See more on the dual nationality in France at the following link:
https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/loda/id/JORFTEXT000000684539/#LEGIARTI000006283718

immigrants because, in the case of Germany, they have a reluctance to acquire German nationality, while in the case of France, they hold both nationalities because they can.

In the case of political refugees from Turkey, the citizenship situation is perceived somewhat differently by these groups compared to economically motivated migrants. Like in many other nations, the law of asylum in Germany and France indicates that persons with refugee status shall not engage in any legal activity with the official sending country; otherwise, their refugee status would be revoked. Furthermore, asylum seekers granted refugee status are legally authorised to be candidates for naturalisation following five years of residency in Germany and France with further requirements, including language knowledge.[188] Under these circumstances, the refugees' response to citizenship acquisition is expected to be different from the economic migrants, as this study also finds. The refugees from Turkey, who, as stated, have largely consisted of Kurds, leftists, and Alevis (Akgönül, 2020), are former Turkish citizens who have become German/French citizens willingly, or they have been obliged to choose one of the citizenships and intentionally preferred to hold the German/French citizenship in order not to have ties with Turkish authorities. However, studies (Bloch & Hirsch, 2017, 2018; Toivanen, 2019) show that the first generation and the receiving-country-born adult children of refugee parents show interest in their homeland, their heritage language, and their cultural background. McDowall (1997) states explicitly that among younger Kurds, the demand to "discover 'who I am' led to a significant surge of interest in political and linguistic identity" during the 1980s and 1990s (p. 457).

As the last point, Turkey's approach to citizenship is critical to evaluate whether it had played a significant role in the development of the Kurds' and other diaspora groups' idea of becoming citizens of political activism and belonging, at least indirectly if not directly. The Turkish government, as early as the 1980s, in parallel to the growth of the Turkish immigrants in European countries who preferred to be permanent (e.g., France) and those who renounced their citizenship to naturalise in their new residence countries (e.g., Germany), started taking new measurements with the changes on the nationality law. With the 1981 law, first, non-resident citizens were enabled to acquire multiple citizenships. The permission for multiple citizenships

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[188] See more on the naturalisation of the refugees in France at the following link:
https://asylumineurope.org/reports/country/france/content-international-protection/status-and-residence/naturalisation

"was enacted expressly in response to the attempts by host countries to integrate Turkish-origin residents by offering them citizenship" (McFadden, 2019, p. 76).[189] Moreover, for the reacquisition of Turkish citizenship, the new law dismissed any possible restriction if the former citizens would like to be Turkish citizens again. The third and most inventive amendment to the nationality law came in 1995. This amendment to the nationality law brought about a "citizenship light", known as a "pink card" (Turkish: *pembe kart*) and from 2004 on "blue card" (Turkish: *mavi kart*), that is granted solely to former Turkish citizens. This card provides every privilege that citizenship could bring (Çağlar, 2004; McFadden, 2019) besides the right to elect and be elected. Through introducing the blue card, the Turkish government has also ensured that Turkish citizens, first and foremost those living in Germany, would not necessarily lose most of their rights back in Turkey if they become German citizens (Kadirbeyoğlu, 2012).[190]

1.3. Concluding remarks

The Turkey-originating immigrant in Germany and France have a similar demographic profile. Mainly due to the proximity of the two countries, the migration waves from Turkey have brought about, by and large, similar demographic profiles to the focus groups of this research; accordingly, these groups present more similarities than differences. The common variables of Germany and France are limited to the historical origins of the Turkey-originating diasporas and the similarity in democracy approaches and economic positions of these resident countries, while there are clear distinctions in the perspective on migrants as well as the citizenship acquisition policies by conditional *jus sanguinis* and the enactment of dual citizenship, yet the response of the immigrants is relatively parallel.

Despite the varieties in these states' approaches to migrant and citizenship issues, particularly the first-generation migrants do not necessarily choose to naturalise for German citizenship, but in the case of France when both nationalities can be taken, they are likely to get French citizenship

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[189] See Adamson (2019) and Aksel (2014) for the further strategies that were taken by the Turkish government to ensure the attachment of the citizens abroad to Turkey such as establishing the Social Affairs and Economic Affairs Committees under the Higher Coordination Council for Workers.

[190] McFadden (2019) draws attention to the complaints of the blue card holders as a result of the bureaucratic hardships of making use of the card as it has been assured.

in addition to the Turkish one. The descendants of Turkey-originating economic immigrants in France, as it goes hand in hand with dual nationality, have the highest proportion among the migrant populations in obtaining their parents' nationality (Simon, 2010). This situation underlines that, for many Turkish citizens who acquire an additional passport – in this case the French passport – it has more of a practical meaning which could also be read, in the case of the descendants of the migrants, as the strength of the attachment to the parents' nationality. This could also be interpreted as, for naturalised citizens, the passport being nothing more than a "material and symbolic proof of membership in the nation-state" (Bivand Erdal & Midtbøen, 2021, p. 1). Therefore, it would not be wrong to claim that citizenship status of these groups does not necessarily mean feeling more German or French, or that it mainly stems from being othered through separation from the German or French "nation-ethno-cultural mainstream" via statistical categories such as "migration background" in Germany (Will, 2019, p. 553).

The refugees from Turkey and elsewhere differ from the economically migrated populations in their responses to the nationality laws, due not only to the law of asylum requirements but also to already feeling othered by Turkey. These people prefer or are obliged to choose one of the citizenships and naturalise; however, their ties with their homeland persist, even in the generations to come. Yet, when it comes to the feeling of belonging or interest in one's homeland, the refugee diasporas parallel the economic migrants.

As seen, obtaining or not obtaining citizenship of the host country is not likely to impact the strength of ties of the Turkey-originating migrants/refugees and their descendants to Turkey or Turkish Kurdistan. According to scholarship, the intergenerational transmission of political and linguistic activities does not cease; on the contrary, given that the receiving countries are democratically more established nations, the refugees find more opportunities to participate and generate more for their homeland transnationally. This situation is also valid for Turkey-originating diasporas' organisations (McDowall, 1997; Odmalm, 2012) and resonates with their strong engagement to Turkey's political scene as well as their response to the homeland parties in both country cases (Østergaard-Nielsen, 2003a). In the following part, I will position the Turkey-originating migrant organisations within these countries' systems, and variations in their legal approaches, by focusing particularly on citizenship regulation. I will provide insights on

how those regulations make little to no difference in Turkey-originating diaspora organisations' transnational political engagement and functioning.

2. Political orientation of the Turkey-originating diasporas and the pro-HDP diasporas' organisations: past and present in Germany and France

Migration flows are primarily characterised by migration networks that blossom in transnational social spaces by the diasporas, as seen above, also in parallel to what first destination then residence countries offer to these groups. Homeland diaspora policies and other factors like the geographical proximity between the sending and receiving countries significantly affect how transnational networks and translocal notions of community are altered in time through generations. This situation is especially valid when the migration flow occurs from the same country of origin to the same destination country; the first generation of migrants would keep coming because of chain migration and transmit the homeland knowledge to the second and third-generation migrants (Odmalm, 2012). With chain migration, individuals migrate with the encouragement and assistance of their families and kin communities, "who, in turn, help and encourage others from their sending region not only to migrate but also find jobs and adjust in other ways" (Poros, 2011). Accordingly, as chains of migrants move, to a great extent, these migrants start living close to each other in the destination countries (Poros, 2011). Chain migration at first could consist of domestic migration from the land to urban cities, which does not require legal obstacles for the individuals who wish to move. However, in the case of Turkey as a sending country and Germany and France as receiving countries, the immigration policies of the latter two countries are significant regarding the possibility of chain migration. As we have seen above, these countries have historically made it hard to permit migrants to start making a settled life for themselves within their borders. However, as in the case of recruitment agreements, migrant flows towards these destination countries have created chains, which over the decades have proven themselves. Furthermore, as noted earlier, Turkish citizens are still numbering in the top five on the forms of migration towards these nations, including but not limited to family reunification, asylum-seeking, and highly skilled labour recruitment.

Boyd (1989) states that networks – here understood as the source of the transnational space – "connect migrants across time and space. … These networks link populations in origin and

receiving countries and ensure that movements are not necessarily limited in time, unidirectional or permanent" (p. 641). Therefore, the embeddedness of Faist's (1998, 2004) two phases, which look at transnational spaces chronologically, could be highly significant indicators that help us understand that evolving social places are hard to separate between chronological phases. This situation is essentially different when the diaspora organisations keep being enlarged with the awaken diaspora members and a new influx of migrants over an extended period from the same sending country through the channels mentioned above.

By focusing on changes in the organisations, the difference is emphasised; however, the way the changes have positioned the identity in the local society and related it to the present context brings sameness to the fore, which makes it necessary to give special attention to the early accounts of the diaspora organisations in receiving countries. This would ensure that we see the Turkey-originating diaspora identities in Germany and France not as nostalgic but as embedded in the present. By focusing on the transformation of the structure as well as the changes in the activities of these diaspora organisations, I will in this part also attempt to show that the changes in the definitions of migrants, varying from unskilled labour migrants (Martin, 1991), forced migrants (Castles, 2003), circular migrants (Castles & Özkul, 2014), undocumented migrants (Hagan, 1994), highly skilled migrants (Vertovec, 2002), to refugees and asylum seekers (Koser & Pinkerton, 2002), are also very much parallel to the aim of the organisations but also evolve in parallel to Turkey's political agenda.

When we look at Bruneau's (2010, p. 4) four poles of diasporas – the enterprise, religion, political, and racial and cultural poles – we observe that Turkey-originating diasporas in the case countries, Germany and France, and their organisations also do not differ to a large extent. That is, enterprise diasporas do not work for the purpose of this study, but the three others fit. Even though the number of those organisations originating from Turkey is hard to name and count, in parallel to the aim of this study as well as considering its limits, the number of the organisations will be restricted to the mainstream Turkish parties' satellite organisations and the alliance organisations of the HDP. Thus, I here highlight the three most found forms that grasp the religion, political, and racial (or ethnic, a term that better suits this study's context) and cultural poles of Turkey-originating diaspora organisations in Germany and France. In light of the points mentioned above, emphasising the Turkish external enfranchisement period, I will first evaluate

the mainstream Turkey-originating political parties' mobilisation through their satellites in Germany and France and, secondly, focus on the HDP alliances in those countries.

2.1. Overview of Turkey-originating diasporas and the emergence and mobilisation of Turkey's mainstream political parties through their satellites in Germany and France

As noted earlier, in the wake of bilateral guest worker labour agreements, starting with Germany in 1961, emigrants from Turkey who were ethnic Turks and Kurds began to flow steadily towards Europe (Aydın, 2016; Sirkeci, 2002). The flow of Turkey-originating emigrants to Europe also had different paths and orientations with each Turkish party in power, particularly after the 1980s. However, in the early 1960s, similar to economically driven migrants from other countries that signed bilateral agreements with Germany, these first Turkish migrants joined trade unions. In these organisations, until the arrival of the politically marginalised groups started during the 1980s, family, friends, kin, and ethnic and religious community members played a significant role to build trust. Poros (2011) states that informal ties are giving rise to chain migration, "which is the most common form of migration from virtually every historical era that has been documented by migration researchers" (p. 15). This has also been the case for the Turkey-originating diasporas that settled in Germany as well as in France; first (including but not limited to) through labour recruitment and family reunification, then continuing through asylum-seeking and highly skilled labour recruitment. These groups later built migration organisations formed through interpersonal ties, particularly with the additional migration waves that were politically motivated (Dudley & Lloyd, 2006, pp. 57–58; Østergaard-Nielsen, 2016; Sirkeci, 2006), and Turkish foreign policy started being more influential, particularly state instruments such as the Turkish-Islamic Union for Religious Affairs (Turkish: *Diyanet İşleri Türk-İslam Birliği*, DITIB) (see also Carol & Hofheinz, 2022; Öcal & Gökarıksel, 2022).

Recalling Akgönül's 'perpetual first generation' strategy[191] (2016) and circular migration, which has become part of the living style of the emigrants, the transnational linkages of the Turkey-originating organisations were solidified. Furthermore, the diaspora communities in their resident

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[191] The 'perpetual first generation' strategy not only keeps the bonds between these populations tight with Turkey (Akgönül 2016), but also invalidates the importance of generational differentiation for migration studies.

countries either maintain their 'political representatives' in Turkey (Amelina & Faist, 2008, p. 92) or become politically more aware and/or more involved.

The literature links political transnationalism and diaspora organisations; diaspora organisations are evaluated via the transnational social spaces the migrant networks created, in terms of their compliance or antagonism with the sending country or with other diaspora organisations. This situation is not any different regarding Turkey-originating groups. Even though the Turkish Constitutional Court prohibited establishing Turkish party missions abroad until the 1987 amendments,[192] as early as the 1970s, it was already possible to observe diaspora organisations' informal support for or affiliation with political parties of Turkey (Dudley & Lloyd, 2006; Massicard, 2010; Østergaard-Nielsen, 2016). This was particularly true after the start of the politically motivated migration wave gave new levels of variation to the diaspora organisations that centred themselves for or against the Turkish government and increased in number. The amplified number of ethnic and religious groups and oppositional political views in the diaspora reinforced the correlation between the diaspora's political stance and Turkey's political turmoil. This situation resulted in the Turkish government's statist diaspora politics strengthening and the increased attention to foreign policy (Lyon & Uçarer, 2001). Nevertheless, since the first steps resembling external voting for the Turkish diaspora in 1987, in which non-resident citizens could vote at the border crossings (see Table 1), the diaspora voters favoured the conservative parties (e.g., the Welfare Party [Turkish: *Refah Partisi*, RP] [193] in the 1991 elections) more than the ones that were in power, until the conservative parties became the ones holding power in the Turkish Grand National Assembly.

Beyond the authoritarian legacy that was prominent across decades in Turkey, it is worthwhile to stress that in the 1960s and 1970s, the economically motivated lower-educated groups from the rural Anatolian heartlands and particularly from small urban areas started immigrating to Europe through guest-worker agreements. Having overall low levels of education and without professional backgrounds, they first migrated to Germany and subsequently to France, the

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[192] For more on the Law on Political Parties see the following link: www.mevzuat.gov.tr/MevzuatMetin/1.5.2820.pdf.

[193] The RP and its later reconvening as the Virtue Party (Turkish: *Fazilet Partisi*) were founded in 1983 and 1998, respectively, then banned in 1998 and 2001 by Turkey's constitutional court on charges of disturbing the secular order.

Netherlands, Austria, Belgium, and Sweden (Avcı & Kirişçi, 2006). These factors contributed to the conservative orientation of their vote, and given further flows through networks of cultures of migration, such political alignment continued to grow (Sirkeci et al., 2012). This is not surprising to the burgeoning literature on migrant and non-migrant voting alignment (e.g., Turcu & Urbatsch, 2020; Wellman, 2021).

From the 1970s onwards, Turkish labour emigration to Western European countries declined due to the oil crisis and the European countries' saturation. The political turmoil of the 1980s and 1990s in Turkey created political refugees who became the main source of the emigration wave (Fassmann & Munz, 1992; Østergaard-Nielsen, 2003a; Sirkeci, 2005). These newer émigré groups from Turkey did not outnumber the economically motivated migrants, so the average sociopolitical demography of the diaspora remained largely conservative; however, the increased voice of the oppositional groups – consisting of leftists, mostly ethnic minority Kurds and not officially recognised religious minority Alevis – in guest-worker residence countries was reflected at the ballot box as the parties their organisations supported and/or mobilised for received proportionally more support abroad than they did in Turkey (Østergaard-Nielsen, 2003a; Sirkeci, 2005; Yener-Roderburg, 2020). Extending party activities beyond borders comes with its legislative[194] and geographical challenges to access the non-resident sympathisers; this concerns all Turkish parties at different levels, which will be touched upon below.

In regard to migrant organisations' political engagement in their host countries, ethnic organisational networks have appeared as the ones that were referenced the most and have also shown positive correlations with migrant organisations' levels of political engagement (Fennema & Tillie, 1999, 2001), especially in parallel with the political opportunities provided by host countries (Fennema & Tillie, 1999; Odmalm, 2012; Vermeulen, 2006). Significantly, in countries like Turkey, which hosts a long-lasting ethnic tension within its boundaries between the Turks and Kurds and between the Turks and Armenians, it is not a coincidence that even before such tensions are carried to other countries where Turkey-originating diasporas are sizeable, ethnic groups affiliated with Turkey-originating political parties (whether banned or

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[194] An administrative provision enacted in 2008 prohibits election campaigning outside of Turkey. Since no criminal liability is attached to the provision, it is left as a 'moral obligation', and parties continue to violate this provision. For more detail see Chapter I.

not) emerged, and their efforts translated into diaspora organisations (Mügge, 2012a; Yener-Roderburg, 2020).[195]

One of the earliest and best-known groups is the supporters of the Republican People's Party (Turkish: *Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi*, CHP). Among the institutionalised Turkish immigrants in Germany, the CHP was supported by an expatriate wing known as the Federation of People's Revolutionary Union (Turkish: *Sosyaldemokrat Halk Dernekleri Federasyonu*, HDF), founded in 1973 in Berlin (Schwalgin & Sökefeld, 2000, p. 13). The extended voting rights of non-resident citizens particularly gave rise to the CHP's remote mobilisation activities. The HDF, only a year after Turkey granted voting rights to its non-resident citizens in 2013, was formalised and became a foundation as CHP's satellite in Germany under the name of CHP Union in Berlin (Turkish: *CHP Berlin Birliği*) (CHP Berlin Birliği, 2019). In addition to the CHP Union in Berlin, some nine other branches of the CHP were established in different regions in Germany. France also has six local CHP chapters. In addition to these two countries, the CHP extended its reach to most European countries and Australia. The party unified all these efforts under one roof called "Overseas Unions of the CHP" (Turkish: *CHP Yurtdışı Birlikleri*). [196] While the CHP chapters in countries other than Germany and France are highly involved in mobilising the CHP sympathisers throughout the electoral periods and organising rallies for party elites to partake in,[197] they are inactive during the election-free periods. During these periods, the branches in Germany and France also show less interest in engagement, yet their social media services are kept relatively up to date with Turkey's political agenda.[198]

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[195] Not all those organisations have increased their influence in the diaspora setting, largely because they already consisted of a smaller community, and the chain migration did not necessarily benefit these communities for the same reason. Two such organisations, the German-Armenian Society (German: *Deutsch-Armenische Gesellschaft*) and the Assyrian Mor Afrem Society (German: *Aramäisch Mor Afrem Gemeinde*), still exist and function mostly locally.

[196] See the following for the detailed information on the Overseas Unions of the CHP: https://www.chp.org.tr/iletisim/yurtdisi-birlikleri

[197] CHP's Cologne, Munich, Manheim, Stuttgart, and Frankfurt rallies held in September 2015 were organised by the CHP's local branches (Dalaman, 2015, September 27).

[198] One of the early 2021 activities that the CHP Union in Berlin took part in was the protest organised in Berlin against the Bogazici University's appointed AKP-affiliated rector (CHP Berlin Birliği, 2021).

One of the earliest responses of the Turkish state against the increased number of oppositional groups in the diaspora, mainly among the leftists, Kurds, and Alevis, can be traced back to the foundation of the Turkish Federation in Germany (Turkish: *Almanya Türk Federasyonu*, ATF, since 2007 *Almanya Demokratik Ülkücü Türk Dernekleri*, ADÜTDF) in 1978 in Frankfurt, Germany (Avrupa Türk Konfederasyon, 2018, April 27). Shortly after its establishment, the ATF, also known as Grey Wolves, an ultra-nationalist group affiliated with the far-right Nationalist Movement Party (Turkish: *Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi,* MHP) (Lemmen, 2000), today has around 170 local chapters with over 7000 members (DW, 2021, November 11). In 2007, the ATF took part in the foundation of the European Turkish Confederation (Turkish: *Avrupa Türk Konfederasyonu*) with six other organisations from other European countries including the Turkish Federation in France (Turkish: *Fransa Türk Federasyonu*, or *Fransa Demokratik Ülkücü Türk Dernekleri Federasyonu*).[199] The Turkish Federation in France, officially founded in 1995, is also known as the most active Turkish nationalist conservative group in this country.[200] One of the founding members of this organisation in France is also a founding member of an Islamist conservative French political party called the Equality and Justice Party (French: *Parti égalité et justice*, PEJ), which serves as an AKP extension in France (Boichot, 2017, June 7).

The European Turkish Confederation is known for its denial of the Armenian Genocide and its militant attitude against the Kurds, Alevis, and leftist activities within and outside of Turkey.[201] The French chapter of the organisation, following accusations of spreading hatred and violence, especially against the Armenians and Kurds, was faced with a ban in France in early November 2020 and may likely be banned in Germany in the near future (DW, 2020, November 7;

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[199] Apart from the ATF and the French Turkish Federation, the founding members of the European Turkish Confederation are as follows: the Democratic Idealist Turkish Federation (Turkish: *Hollanda Demokratik Ülkücü Türk Dernekleri Federasyonu*), the Belgian Federation of the Turkish Associations in the Netherlands (Turkish: *Belçika Türk Dernekleri Federasyonu*), the Federation of the Turkish-Islamic Cultural Associations in Switzerland (Turkish: *İsviçre Türk-İslam Kültür Dernekleri Federasyonu*), the Turkish Federation in Denmark (Turkish: *Danimarka Türk Federasyonu*) and the Federation of Idealist Turkish Associations in Austria (Turkish: *Avusturya Ülkücü Türk Dernekleri Federasyonu*). The other affiliated organisations are the Turkish Federation in Britain (Turkish: *Ingiltere Türk Federasyonu*), the Turkish Federation in Norway (Turkish: *Norveç Türk Federasyonu*), and lastly the Turkish Federation in Sweden (Turkish: *İsveç Türk Federasyonu*) (Avrupa Türk Konfederasyon, 2018, April 27).

[200] The data on the number of members as well as local Turkish Federation in France are unknown.

[201] The Grey Wolves are known for their association to the Maraş massacre, which ended up killing over 100 Alevis in the city of Kahramanmaraş, and some other militant activities against ethnic and religious minority groups in Turkey.

France24, 2020, November 2). With their statements, the German deputies favouring such a ban underlined that "the organisation was 'the extended arm' of the Turkish president [Recep Tayyip Erdoğan]" (DW, 2020, November 7). These organisations became diaspora advocates of the Nationalist Movement Party (Turkish: *Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi*, MHP), as well as the AKP, since the MHP had a political alliance with the AKP in 2016 under the People's Alliance (Turkish: *Cumhur İttifakı*), and are also known with their active involvement in the Turkish elections from their countries of residence (Avrupa Türk Konfederasyon, 2018, April 27).

The Kurdish community's political stance in Europe in general, and in Germany and France in particular, is highly important to note. Yet as this dissertation takes this ethnic group as one of its major variables for the analysis, they will be studied below in more detail.

In recent decades, the increase in the number of migrants moving to Western Europe and North America from non-Christian countries has elevated the number of studies examining immigrant religions, public visibility, and radicalisation (Baumann, 2014; Koenig et al., 2016; Sirseloudi, 2012). Large-scale immigration not only has increased the number of co-believers in faith-based organisations but, by virtue of their growing size, has also made these organisations important political actors locally, translocally, and transnationally (Hallstein Holte, 2020; Rosenow-Williams, 2012). By taking a closer look at Turkey-originating diaspora religious organisations in Germany and France, similar to the above-stated point about ethnic tension, different belief groups adopted different political paths abroad, particularly Sunni Muslims and Alevis. The political orientation of the Turkish authorities, positive towards Sunni Muslims and antagonistic towards Alevis[202] and other religious minorities, systematically built over decades, has also elevated the number and strength of these groups. These religious-based organisations have either been operated by Turkish state actors as foreign-policy instruments directly (e.g., DITIB in Western Europe) or indirectly (e.g., the Islamic Community Milli Görüş [German: *Islamische Geminschaft Milli Görüş*, IGMG] in Western Europe), or have found the opportunity to exist within democratically freer host nations, (AABF in Germany, FUAF in France, the British Alevi Federation in the United Kingdom).

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[202] Alevis and their organisations will be detailed in the following sections.

As the polarisation among the diaspora groups originating from Turkey increased drastically after a great amount of political refugee influx towards Western Europe, particularly to Germany following the 1980 Coup, another response from the Turkish state came by the right-wing ANAP under Turgut Özal: DITIB. DITIB is known as the major non-state institution that is the extended arm of the Turkish state, essentially the major foreign-policy apparatus in Germany and France (Çitak, 2010). DITIB, despite having its roots in the 1970s (Aksel, 2014),[203] was officially founded during the Özal era in 1984 as a branch of the Turkish Directorate of Religious Affairs, known as *Diyanet*,[204] in order to meet the religious needs of the Sunni communities originating from Turkey and residing in Germany – but, more significant than that, to do so despite the unsuccessful decades-long attempt to unify the increasing number of varieties of Turkish Islamic groups, including but not limited to the Organisation of the National Vision (Turkish: *Milli Görüş*), the Suleymanists,[205] and the Gulenists (Bruce, 2018; Öcal, 2020). Although there were approaches in the early years of DITIB in which it was a religious organisation open to every Sunni Muslim group (Amelina & Faist, 2008; Rosenow-Williams, 2012), DITIB has, since its early years, been steadily politically instrumentalised by sending imams (Aksel, 2014; Hür, 2018, January 26) and the most influential apparatus of the ruling governments, including, since 2002, of the still-ruling party AKP.[206] Today active DITIB headquarters function in at least eight

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[203] During the 1970s, the Turkish Ministry of Labour appointed the imams as "social assistants" following the proposal of Diyanet. During the 1970s, according to former Diyanet president Altıkulaç (2011), there were as few as eight to ten religious officials sent to of all Western Europe to provide religious services.

[204] Diyanet was founded in 1924 to control the religious affairs by placing emphasis only on Sunni Islam. It principally elevated Sunni Islam to the status of the default religion of the State (Göle, 1997). See Parla and Davidson (2004) for more on the formation and evolution of Diyanet in Turkey from the early republican era. See Akgönül and Öztürk's (2018) special issue on religion as a foreign policy tool for more on the multi-dimensional tool role of Turkey's Diyanet abroad. Today Diyanet through DITIB and its Religious Affairs Attachés reaches 102 countries and thousands of staff (Subaşı, 2017, January 26).

[205] Suleymanists are an Islamic group which became active during the 1960s and expanded their network from the 1970s on in Germany (Bruce, 2018).

[206] Considering the general election mobilisation of the AKP held for the June and November 2015 and 2018 elections in Germany and France, the AKP's out-of-country organisational structure, which could be called AKP satellites, specifically consisted of three institutional formations not limited to the local DITIBs. The local Election Coordination Centres (Turkish: *Seçim Koordinasyon Merkezleri*, SKMs), which numbered at least 40 in Germany alone, and the International Democrats (Turkish: *Uluslararası Demokratlar Birliği*, UID or UETD), numbering 38 in all Europe, including 15 in Germany and 7 in France, were the major satellite organisations that ran the election coordination in the country cases, including but not limited to organising the rallies and shuttle busses for the AKP electorates (Yener-Roderburg, 2020).

See the following link for more on the UID chapters: https://u-id.org/bolge-ve-subeler/

European countries, acting as umbrella organisations for many mosque foundations spread in these geographies with a highly top-down organisational structure with a supervisory council consisting of imams from the Turkish Diyanet.[207] This situation made DITIB the largest informal source of the Turkish state's networking in Europe through Diyanet.

Today, in Germany, DITIB is seen as an umbrella Islamic organisation with the largest community; it controls around 980 active mosques, claiming to serve about 800,000 people – or roughly a third of those with a Turkish background – and promoting moderate Sunni Islam (DITIB, 2019b). DITIB in France, the Turkish-Islamic Union for Religious Affairs in France (Turkish: *Fransa Diyanet İşleri Türk İslam Birliği*, Fransa DITIB) with its better-known name the Coordination Committee of Turkish Muslims in France (French: *Le Comité de coordination des musulmans turcs de France*, CCMTF), was first founded in Paris in 1986 and has three other headquarters in Lyon, Strasbourg, and Bordeaux (DITIB Lyon [Union Turco-Islamique d'Affaires Religieuses à Lyon], 2020; DITIB Paris [Union Turco-Islamique d'Affaires Religieuses à Paris], 2018). Each of these headquarters is affiliated with Turkey-originating, mostly religion-centred cultural diaspora organisations, numbering in total (including these four headquarters) 295 all over France. Approximately 45 percent of the associations receive imams sent and paid by the Turkish government (Akgönül, 2020). As most Sunni Muslims in Germany have their origins in Turkey, DITIB is also considered the most prominent Islamic organisation in this country. However, the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution (German: *Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz*, BfV) – since 2018, the German Federal Ministry of the Interior – cut all funds for DITIB, around 6 million Euros between 2012 and 2018, due to acting as a nationalist rather than religious organisation,[208] as well as for being claimed to be the "influential force in Ankara [AKP]" (DW, 2018, September 28).[209]

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[207] The countries that have official DITIB are Germany, France, Austria, Belgium, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Great Britain, and Denmark (DITIB, 2019a).

[208] Allegations against DITIB amongst others are "war propaganda against Kurds, and imams spying on members in order to uncover connections to Fethullah Gülen, whom Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan suspects to be the mastermind behind the 2016 military coup" (Carol & Hofheinz, 2022, p. 2).

[209] Devran Koray Öcal and Banu Gökarıksel (2022) in their article claim that many DITIB communities try to establish their autonomous "self-reliance and self-governance in their everyday practices and decisions" against Diyanet's attempts to bring them "under its direct control" (p. 152).

On the other hand, Turkey-originating Sunni Muslim groups in France come as the fourth-largest group, following Algerians, Moroccans, and Tunisians with an approximate population of 700,000 (Poyet, 2021, January 21). Yet, as known especially with the most recent news,[210] it has been assured that all the mentioned ethnic Sunni diaspora groups differ significantly in their preferences regarding the mosque community they would like to take part in. Turkey-originating Sunni believers largely prefer the DITIB umbrella organisation as noted known as CCMTF, while a smaller population prefers the Islamic Confederation of Mili Görüş (French: *la confédération Islamique Mili Görüş*, CIMG) (Akgönül, 2020; Poyet, 2021, January 21).

Despite the DITIB's claims that it is an Islamic civil society organisation run by the Turkish community members and that it has become independent from the Turkish state, it is widely understood that the founding link between the Diyanet and DITIB has never practically been severed and remains strong (Öcal, 2020; Öcal & Gökarıksel, 2022; Ögelman, 2003) in either of the countries, whether or not it has a different name (CCMTF in France) (Poyet, 2021). Moreover, the imams and other employees of these mosques are classified as Turkish civil servants who receive their training in Turkey and get paid by the Turkish government (Amelina & Faist, 2008). This situation was well observed by the governing parties, which overlaps with what Hallstein Holte (2020) underlines: the increased number of believers in faith-based organisations also turns them into significant political actors.

It was noted earlier that the long-lasting ethnic tension between the Turks and Kurds has also been brought abroad. Despite its founding reasons centred on the needs of the Sunni community originating from Turkey, the politicised DITIB has also adopted the Turkified Sunni approach of Diyanet. Some of the research participants who were pro-HDP Sunni Kurdish community members claimed that heads and members of the DITIB mosques express unwillingness towards the Kurdish presence at these mosques openly. Sarah Carol and Lukas Hofheinz (2022) with their article, which analysed the Friday sermons of DITIB, confirms the DITIB's hostile approaches towards Kurds. This exclusion and hostility have increased within the last decade. It has paved the way for more than 40 mosques around Germany to be established to serve the

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[210] The charter of principles for Islam of France that was proposed by the French Council of Muslim Worship (French: *Conseil Français du Culte Musulman*, CFCM) was rejected by Fransa DITIB (aka CCMTF) and CIMG.

Sunni Muslim Kurdish population,[211] particularly coming from Turkey, under the Islamic umbrella organisation for Kurds, the Islamic Society of Kurdistan (Kurdish: *Civaka Îslamiya Kurdistan*, CÎK) (ANF News, 2017, June 16).[212] An openly AKP partisan interviewee, yet also a DITIB mosque employee, shared his view, confirming the previously mentioned stance:

> We do not stop them [the Kurds] coming to our mosques, this is God's home in the end. But if they come to our mosques, they have to follow our rules. We speak only in Turkish here; our president is Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. If they [the Kurds] come here and try to change our rules, it is better for them to have their own [worship] place. (Interviewee no. 62)

Thus, it was not surprising that following the enfranchisement of the non-resident citizens abroad, DITIB has become more openly an instrument of the ruling government by the AKP with further indicators (Yener-Roderburg, 2020). The influential activities of DITIB favouring the AKP, especially during the lengthy voting periods of Germany and France for the Turkish elections, have peaked. Although the pro-AKP speeches before prayers by the imams seemed to be the major visible approach that the DITIB imams had (Carol & Hofheinz, 2022), it was not the only one. The DITIB imams, as Turkish civil servants appointed directly by Diyanet, were assigned formal election duties.[213] However, the pro-AKP stance of the DITIB was not a secret (Bruce, 2018; Öcal, 2020), yet especially during electoral periods, opposition parties found this situation controversial because DITIB's AKP connections would threaten election safety as the committee members held the keys to the storage rooms where the cast ballots were kept (Yeni Özgür Politika, 2017, March 27). This situation has become more of a controversy at DITIB community areas that were rented for the electoral period as polling stations of Turkish elections (e.g., DITIB mosques in Strasbourg and Lyon) (Akgönül, 2020; Avrupa Forum, 2017, March 17).[214]

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[211] According to the estimations of the president of CÎK Hafız Ahmet *Turhallı,* 60–70 percent of the Kurdish population in Germany are Sunni Muslims (ANF News, 2017, June 16), which is parallel to the Sunni Muslim population in the Kurdistan region (Allison, 2017), however an official data on the matter does not exist.

[212] Interviews with Interviewee no. 3 and Interviewee no. 9.

[213] For further explanation on the unlawfulness of DITIB employees working as balloting committee members, as well as the Turkish Law on Ballot Box safety regulations and balloting committees, see Chapter I.

[214] See Chapter I for more on the problems related to the implementation of external voting.

In response to the increase in the variety of groups abroad following the 1980 military coup, the right-wing Motherland Party (Turkish: *Anavatan Partisi*, ANAP) under Turgut Özal enabled the above-mentioned inclusion of non-resident voters into the Turkish elections in 1987. However, in the 1991 general election, the Islamist Welfare Party (Turkish: *Refah Partisi*, RP) got the biggest support from the non-resident voters,[215] more than the centre-right True Path Party (Turkish: *Doğru Yol Partisi*, DYP) which won power in the parliament as it emerged as the largest party according to the in-country election results (see Figure 11). The organisational level of the RP abroad, especially in Germany and France, is significant because, as the example of the RP shows, the organisational capacities of the migrant organisations also play a role in the ballots in return regarding the homeland elections. The Organisation of the National Vision [*Milli Görüş*] in Germany (Turkish: *Avrupa Milli Görüş Teşkilatı*) officially first appeared in Germany and Switzerland in the early 1980s as the RP-affiliated organisation within and outside of Turkey (Amelina & Faist, 2008; Østergaard-Nielsen, 2016). The founder of the RP, Necmettin Erbakan, paid a visit to these two countries in the late 1980s, "marking the beginning of the implantation of *Milli Görüş*" among the Turkey-originating communities (Bruce, 2018, p. 80). A decade later, in 1995, this organisation was renamed as the Islamic Community Milli Görüş (German: *Islamische Geminschaft Milli Görüş*, IGMG) (Amiraux, 2003). The same year, former IGMG leader Osman Yumakogullari was elected as an MP from RP, which reconvened as the Virtue Party (Turkish: *Fazilet Partisi*, FP), and the following electoral period, he was elected from the FP, which subsequently reconvened as the Felicity Party (Turkish: *Saadet Partisi*, SP), along with a few other IGMG elites (Østergaard-Nielsen, 2016). At this time, the IGMG was already highly active and had spread in other European countries controlling thousands of mosques and other associations, obtained thousands of members, and extended its reach to different continents, including Australia (Amelina & Faist, 2008).

IGMG defined itself as a Sunni Islam–promoting religious organisation with an emphasis on "national" (Turkish: *milli*). Despite the varied political activities of IGMG, until the 2000s, the most important ones were their mass gatherings in Europe, generally in Germany. Having the most advantageous position of monopolised access to state resources since the 2002 election

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[215] The RP to this day is the only Turkish political party to receive the highest votes abroad (in the 1991 elections) while not having the same success at home.

victory, [216] the AKP had a centralised organisational setting at the local and national levels, similar to other Turkey-based political parties (Doğan, 2017; Yılmaz & Bashirov, 2018), that extended its reach abroad, as seen, mostly via local DITIBs (Bruce, 2018; Yener-Roderburg, 2020).

There have been drastic changes and diminution observed within the activities as well as among the members of IGMG, which was also the case with the *Milli Görüş* and its followers in Turkey. Until the early 2000s, IGMG and DITIB cooperated for the Federal Home Office's Islamic Conferences (German: *Deutche Islam Konferez*) (Amelina & Faist, 2008).

Therefore, considering this information on the development of DITIB and IGMG as well as the changes they went through since their foundation in the country cases, these organisations have become the ideal places for the economically motivated lower-educated groups that arrived in the country cases as early as the 1960s and 1970s, who have essentially had a conservative orientation of their vote. Due to their exponentially increasing numbers, especially through family reunification, over the two-decade experience of border-crossing voting (from 1987 to 2011), the external voters' political orientation has traditionally tended to support conservative right-wing parties over centre-right or left-wing parties (Supreme Electoral Council of Turkey [YSK], 2020) (see Figure 11); before the emergence of the conservative, Islamic-leaning, populist AKP, the external voters benefitted its predecessors: first the Islamic RP, then the FP.

Following the ban of the FP, its MPs founded two sections of parties which since 2001 have become the AKP and the SP. These parties' competition resonated abroad through religious institutions. While some non-resident followers remained royal and have supported the IGMG-affiliated parties, most have shifted to the AKP. The SP, the successor of the FP, currently gathers the IGMG members under its roof for the Turkish elections. The SP participated in the electoral alliance of four opposition parties called the Nation Alliance (Turkish: *Millet İttifakı*), formed to contest the 2018 general elections by rivalling the pro-government People's Alliance (Selçuk & Hekimci, 2020). Despite its low vote share abroad, the SP is still active in mobilising

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[216] Since the first general election in which the AKP took part in 2002, the AKP has been the most voted Turkish political party.

its supporters in the country cases, particularly during the Turkish elections (see Figure 11).[217] Since its second election in 2007, non-resident voters cast ballots at airport gates and border crossings throughout the elections, showing greater support for the AKP than resident voters even as it was the most voted Turkish political party. Other case studies also underline that incumbent parties with diaspora support expand voting rights to non-resident nationals, while incumbent parties without diaspora support restrict those rights (Umpierrez de Reguera et al., 2021; Wellmann, 2021). Here, therefore, it would be important to recall and underline that the AKP not only made the final necessary amendments that enabled external voting as an incumbent party but also proved why the previously ruling ones did not as I analysed in the first chapter.

In this section, we have observed the diaspora organisations that have been analysed extensively for their engagements in trajectories of homeland-originating political parties, which comprehensively combined with external voting after 2014. In most of the political party studies that focus on their overseas functioning, diaspora organisations are seen as the target of the homeland political parties (Koinova & Tsourapas, 2018); here, a path-dependent perspective which is limited to the extraterritorial reach of the home country parties (Burgess, 2018; Burgess & Tyburski, 2020; Østergaard-Nielsen & Ciornei, 2019b; Paarlberg, 2017) has also shown consistency with the mainstream Turkish political parties and their satellites in the country cases.

In the following part, I will build my argument on the likelihood of the migrants and refugees, as keen builders of transnational spaces of their own, to become the source of political mobilisation themselves in combination with external voting, with the help of the pro-HDP diasporas' organisations in Germany and France.

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[217] For the official page of the representation of the SP in Germany, please see the following link:
https://saadetpartisifan.chayns.net/#Herzlich--Willkomen

For the representation of the SP in France, please see the following link:
https://www.facebook.com/Saadet.Strasburg/

2.2. The diasporas' organisations that are the HDP's alliances: past and present in Germany and France

The HDP's official effort to mobilise supporters living abroad was quite scarce, particularly compared to the other established Turkey-originating parties' decades-long existence in diaspora. Throughout the fieldwork and examination of the primary and the secondary sources, at the institutional level, no reasons came to the forefront as a motivational factor for the institutions that have become the allies of the party.[218]

As stated earlier in the introduction chapter, the literature on diaspora organisations, despite these organisations' capacity, does not credit them as the source of the political mobilisation; rather, studies on political parties abroad often put stress on the influence of homeland parties on the diaspora organisations (Burgess, 2018; Burgess & Tyburski, 2020; Fliess, 2021; Østergaard-Nielsen & Ciornei, 2019; Paarlberg, 2017, 2020). This reduced understanding of the diaspora organisations disregards the fact that the organisations with an autonomous structure or independent nature, and/or with their own will, may likely develop an interest in homeland political parties and mobilise for them as alliances rather than satellites. Therefore, knowing more about how and why the diaspora organisations are involved with or generate mobilisation for a homeland political party throughout the sending-country electoral period in the residence countries could significantly contribute to the knowledge of diaspora studies as well as external voting studies. Here in this part, to contribute to the field, the pro-HDP diaspora organisations will be elaborated.

It is hard to identify and count the number of organisations originating from Turkey that have shown institutional support for the HDP since external voting was enabled for Turkish citizens; considering the limits of this study, with the help of two criteria, it can be narrowed down to three types of organisations. As mentioned several times earlier, the first criterion is (a) the diaspora organisations should have had a political stance favouring the HDP throughout the Turkish electoral periods of the June and November 2015 elections. The second criterion (b) covers organisations with different degrees of support for this party. The incentives that overlap with the interstices of various diaspora groups are high in number, and when we try to

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[218] The individual level of analysis will be detailed in Chapter III.

understand why the HDP became the microcosm for the supporters, we come across highly rooted organisations. Therefore, this analysis focuses only on three major supporting groups covering the most major diaspora organisations that were particularly prominent throughout the 2015 June and November elections and happened to be HDP supporters: (1) veritable organisations, (2) situational organisations, and (3) precarious organisations.[219]

In parallel to Bruneau's poles of diasporas the chronological appearance of the diaspora organisations, both criteria help us narrow down the organisations in the case countries. The selected organisations that will be focused on to serve the purpose of this dissertation are as follows. First, the veritable organisations are exemplified by the Democratic Social Centre of the Kurds in Germany (Kurdish: *Navenda Civaka Demokratîk ya Kurdên li Almanyayê*, NAV-DEM) and the Kurdish Democratic Council in France (French: *Conseil Démocratique kurde en France*, CDK-F). Second, the situational organisations are embodied by the Alevi Federation in Germany (German: *Alevitische Gemeinde Deutschland*, AABF) and the Federation of Alevi Unions in France (French: *Fédération Union des Alévis en France*, FUAF). Finally, the Federation of Democratic Workers' Associations (Turkish: *Demokratik İşçi Dernekleri Federasyonu,* DIDF) in Germany and France shows itself as a precarious organisation (see Image 1).

In this part, I will first focus on the pre-external voting period, which would include a timeline from the early political predispositions of these organisations until the Turkish external enfranchisement period (2012), and then secondly, I will highlight how, from that point on (2012–2018), these organisations mobilised as HDP alliances from different levels, and their pro-HDP strategies were put into effect. Lastly, my discussion of each organisation will conclude with a comparison between the resident countries, but also the expression of the interconnectedness of the translocal associations in Germany and France. The European level of translocal connections will be briefly raised when relevant. The incentives of the individual levels of support shown by the members of these organisations will be analysed in detail in Chapter III.

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[219] Here recalling Duverger's (1976) degrees of participation. See Introduction section 5.5. for more detail.

2.2.1. Ethno-nationalism through diaspora organisations: Kurdish NAV-DEM and CDK-F

The Kurdish community's population and political stance in Germany and France has also appeared to primarily determine the HDP's position in the ballot boxes abroad (see Map 2, Figures 1, 13 and 14) with the help of the prominent Kurdish organisations NAV-DEM and CDK-F. In this part, the origin of the Kurdish issue and the emergence of the Kurdish diaspora will be briefly elaborated. This part will then seek to answer how these two organisations were founded and have presented themselves as the main defenders of the Kurdish parties originating from Turkey. This study refers to these organisations as the veritable ones regarding their party loyalty – here, to the HDP.

Kurds, known as the largest ethnic group without a state, started being called Kurdish only in the last century (Özoğlu, 2012). Yet to this day, there are no official and reliable statistics on the numerical importance of the Kurds. None of the countries where the Kurds live include ethnicity in their population census. Kurds, however, as ample studies show, have spread mainly in four countries in the region known as Kurdistan: in order of population, Turkey (~18 M), Iran (~8 M), Kurdish-controlled Northern Iraq (~4–5 M), and Syria (~2M) (Institut kurde de Paris, 2016; Watts, 2010: XI) (see Map 1). The Kurdish diaspora that particularly resides in Western Europe is also estimated to be around 2 million. Similar to most of the other host countries, the German and French states, the case countries of this study, categorise Kurds as nationals of Iraq, Iran, Syria, or Turkey due to the absence of Kurdistan as a recognised country. The Council of Europe (2006) report shows that the mobilised and political Kurds in western countries primarily consist of those from Turkey.[220] Since the Syrian civil war started in early 2011, many Syrian citizens, including Kurds, migrated from the war region to the West. This has changed the demographics of the Kurds in the West, reducing the proportion of Kurds coming from Turkey in the destination countries. However, due to the decades-old residency and established institutionalised structure of the Euro-Kurds that was dominated by Turkey-originating Kurds –

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[220] According to the Council of Europe sitting report in 2006, the most recent data available, about 1,300,000 of them live in Western Europe. The same report indicates that out of this population, 700,000 to 800,000 are residing in Germany. The same report underlines that around 85 percent of the Kurdish diaspora in the West comes from Turkey (Council of Europe, 2006).

which could be well underlined by the level of mobilisation of the Kurds from Turkey in the diaspora being higher than the Kurds from other states (Demir, 2017; Hassanpour & Mojab, 2004) – and the continuing chain migration, the cultural and political preponderance of the Kurds that came from Turkey has not visibly changed due to such a demographic shift. Thus, it can be deduced that more than half of the Kurdish population that reside in their 'homelands' live in Turkey. Despite making their respective countries their resident countries yet also their homeland, Kurds have experienced "assimilation to genocidal measures" in those countries (Başer & Toivanen, 2018, p. 2072).

Watts (1999) starts her article "Allies and Enemies: Pro-Kurdish Parties in Turkish Politics" with the following sentence: "Preventing the development of an ethnic Kurdish cultural and political movement has been a priority of the Turkish state since the Kurdish-led Shaykh Said Rebellion of 1925" (p. 631). Although it was known to the Ottoman Empire, the predecessor of the Turkish Republic, the Kurds were recognised with their wishes yet not officially recognised by the authorities. This situation could be summed up by noting that "the suppression of the Kurdish ethnic identity and the refusal to grant the Kurdish minorities political, cultural and linguistic rights" still today leads to "outbursts of violent conflict" at times (Başer & Toivanen, 2018, p. 2072).

In Turkey, Kurds comprise the largest ethnic group after ethnic Turks. Although the Turkish census after 1965 does not recognise ethnic differences and accepts every Turkish citizen as a "Turk", it is estimated by a number of scholarly works that the Kurds make up between 15 and 20 percent of the total population within Turkey. They are clustered mostly in the neighbouring countries of Iran, Iraq, and Syria, the other three major countries where the Kurdish population live (see Map 1). Mutlu (1996, pp. 526–527) states that in thirteen southeastern provinces of Turkey – Ağrı, Batman, Bingöl, Bitlis, Diyarbakır, Hakkari, Iğdır, Mardin, Muş, Şırnak, Siirt, Tunceli, and Van – the Kurdish population constitutes the majority (55 to 90 percent), while eight other provinces in eastern Turkey and big cities such as Istanbul have a sizeable Kurdish minority (15 to 50 percent).

Andrews (1989), in his extensive study, shows that Kurdishness, particularly as a mother tongue, is the main determinant when it comes to separation from the Turks in comparison to Muslim religious denominations and traditions such as marriage ceremonies, dances, and music

(Andrews, 1989, pp. 112–113; Mutlu, 1996).[221] However, religion, as said, is not a prominent factor for the separation of Kurds from Turks, since around 70 percent of Kurds are believed to be Sunni Muslim (largely following the Shafi'i school) like most of the Turks (who follow the Hanafi school), while approximately 25 percent are Alevis, and the rest belong to different belief groups including Yazidis (Allison, 2017).

The Turkish oppression of Kurds did not start with the foundation of the Turkish Republic. Nevertheless, the effects of the oppression and repression on Kurds started with the nation-building process of Turkey. This situation has been legalised but has also resonated and become visible in public spaces. Even though the existential denial of the Kurds precipitated harsh responses by the Turkish authorities against Kurdish leaders who resisted submission, the more systematic repression came in the coming decades from various angles (Bozarslan, 2008). Turkish was accepted as the only official language of Turkey from the first constitutions of 1921 and 1924,[222] and has remained so since then, which has been used to instrumentalise the government apparatuses to impose Turkishness heavily in the Kurdish-speaking regions.[223] The Turkish Language Society (Turkish: *Türk Dil Kurumu*, TDK) was founded in 1932 to promote a unified national language; to this day, this authority functions to implement the state's language policy (Çolak, 2004). As early as the 1930s, including in Kurdish-majority districts, language committees were established. These committees were responsible for spreading Turkish and translating non-Turkish products into Turkish. In Izmir, the legalised sole Turkish language use went as far as prohibiting non-Turkish language use in public spaces (Çolak, 2004).[224] Watts

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[221] The Kurdish language, even though it varies regionally, is divided into four groups, Kurmanji, Sorani, Zazaki, and Gurani. The majority of the Kurdish population in Turkey speak Kurmanji. Zazaki is also spoken by a minority that largely live in the regians of Dersim, Elazığ, and Bingöl (Scalbert-Yücel, 2006).

[222] The 1921 Constitution can be found at: http://genckaya.bilkent.edu.tr/1921C.html; the 1924 Constitution can be found at: https://www.worldstatesmen.org/Turkeyconstitution1924.pdf

[223] "Despite legal reforms and a growing public discourse of ethnic diversity, as late as 2008 Kurdish-language instruction was still not permitted in universities or public schools. Only in early 2009 were a few select universities told they could begin for the first time to teach Kurdish literature or history" (Watts, 2010, p. XIV). However, in recent years, it has been observed that the heads of the Kurdish literature and history departments at the universities are being replaced with non-Kurdish speaking people; additionally, theses written in the Kurdish language at such departments are not being permitted anymore (Gazete Duvar, 2020).

[224] The campaign, known as "Citizens! Speak Turkish!" (original phrase in Turkish: *Vatandaş Türkçe Konuş!*), targeted non-Muslim residents of Turkey, Anatolian Greeks (*Rums*) to start with; however, it quickly spread to other regions where all minority language groups were affected (Çolak, 2004, p. 81).

(2010) underlines that later on, throughout the multi-party era, particularly following the 1960 military coup, non-Turkish names, particularly Kurdish names of the districts, were changed to Turkish ones. The local birth registration offices did not accept Kurdish given names until 2005. Watts calls these efforts of the Turkish Republic "a flood of research used pseudo-science to attempt to 'prove' that Kurds were really Turks, and that Kurdish did not exist as a distinct language" (Watts, 2010, p. XIV).

The 1960s were also the years in which the Kurdish nationalist struggle launched in parallel to the Kurdish struggle in Iraq under Mulla Mustafa Barzani (Jongerden & Güneş, 2021). Under these circumstances, in 1965, the nationalist Kurdistan Democratic Party of Turkey (Turkish: *Türkiye Kürdistan Demokratik Partisi*, T-KDP) was established and was the only Kurdish party at the time. Yet many other Kurdish activists were active in the socialist Workers' Party of Turkey (Turkish: *Turkiye İşçi Partisi*, TIP) (Güneş, 2013). As a result, these two parties emerged as political entities at that time and collaborated against the Turkish state's ethnic suppression and oppression (Jongerden & Güneş, 2021). TIP is a critical political party in Turkish party history because it appeared as the first Turkish party that accepted the existence of the Kurdish population long rejected in Southeastern Turkey, and it also listed the democratic demands of Kurds among the party objectives. Furthermore, TIP has defined the Kurdish question as an ethnic and national problem that went beyond the 'underdeveloped' designation the Turkish state attributed to the region for decades (Akkaya, 2013, p. 6).

During the late 1960s, the Revolutionary Cultural Hearths of the East (Turkish: *Doğu Devrimci Kültür Ocakları*, DDKO) was founded. DDKO is also a significant organisation considering that with DDKO, the Kurdish movement separated itself from the Turkish left and also gained its autonomy from the Iraqi Kurds. In order to avoid being banned, despite the highly connected networks, the DDKO branches were founded in various cities as independent organisations (Akkaya, 2013, p. 6).

The Kurdish nationalist movement was on the rise in the aftermath of the 1971 coup, which led to the emergence of the earlier version of the Workers Party of Kurdistan (Kurdish: *Partîya Karkerên Kurdistan*, or Turkish: *Kürdistan İşçi Partisi*, or *Apocular*, PKK) in Ankara by the university students (Jongerden & Güneş, 2021). On November 27, 1978, the PKK as it is known today was established and also detached itself from TIP (Jongerden & Akkaya, 2012). The PKK

has become the sole voice of the revolutionary Kurdish party that struggled for Kurdish political rights, against the Turkish state's repression, and promoted an independent Kurdistan. Since then, the PKK has also become the major nationalist mobilisation organisation of Kurds in Turkey for the last four decades, parallel to its networking capacity that enlarged over time. Furthermore, the PKK has also hegemonised Kurdish politics in Turkey from the 1980s onwards (Güneş, 2013). Over the course of the 1970s, a number of Kurdish parties were founded; however, they could not survive the 1980 military coup orchestrated by General Kenan Evren.

As pointed out in Chapter I, Section 2.1, the evolution of Turkish political parties has brought about two types of political culture: the elimination of the challengers by the parties in power while, in response to that, the challengers develop survival and adaptation strategies. In the aftermath of the 1980 period, this approach from both sides has only been ensured by the Kurdish political parties as from the challengers' side. Following the 1980 coup, for more than a decade, imprisonment of thousands of people from the Kurdish movement, as well as left-wing groups and union leaders, has become a common practice of the government on the grounds of alleged crimes of thought. Arresting the pro-Kurdish party elites of these parties, whether they were elected MPs or not, has become a common practice. Furthermore, tormenting political prisoners became a systematic action of the Turkish government from the 1980s on,[225] which could be traced to this day as the number of political figures of the pro-Kurdish political parties' claims based on that post-1980 period. Such incidents were carried out hand in hand with other oppressive actions of the Turkish state. For over two decades, from 1987 to early 2002, Kurdish-majority southern provinces were under the state of emergency legislation (known as OHAL region, Turkish: *Olağan Üstü Hal Bölge Valiliği*), in which one-third of the total Turkish armed forces were deployed as a counter-terrorist measure (Jongerden, 2007). This situation had a significant result on the demographics of the region. The Turkish army's war against the PKK guerillas ended up destroying around 3000 villages, and more than 2–3 million Kurds were forcefully displaced from their homes (Çelik, 2015; Jongerden, 2001; Netherlands Kurdistan Society, 1995; Watts, 2010, p. XV). Moreover, it is estimated that around 40,000 people lost their lives due to the conflict between the PKK and the Turkish army (Güneş, 2013).

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[225] See Dorronsoro's (2008) article and the report of the Human Rights Foundation of Turkey (2002) for more detail.

2.2.1.1. History of pro-Kurdish political parties in Turkey

In parallel to what was happening in Turkish Kurdistan from the 1980s on, the pro-Kurdish political parties were seen, particularly by the parties in power, as challengers through the promotion of Kurdish cultural and political rights and regionalism, which lead to their bans by the facilitated law on political parties.[226] The Turkish political party ban has evolved and changed to be easily implemented, and in response, the 'unwanted' voices find their ways to re-vocalise themselves depending on the conjuncture, which was the Kurds from the 1990s on (see Table 5).[227] The major legislative restriction on the pro-Kurdish parties came with the Anti-Terror Law in 1991, a year after the foundation of the first Kurdish political party, the People's Labour Party (Turkish: *Halkın Emek Partisi*, HEP). This law was adopted to combat the PKK by the parliament. Nevertheless, it has been interpreted "broadly to curtail peaceful Kurdish opposition, censor the Kurdish press, suspend political freedoms and ban one pro-Kurdish political party after another since 1993" (Kurban, 2014, p. 9) by the judicial authorities, which started a pattern in which, with each banned Kurdish party, a substitute party was formed, or the party merged with the succeeding one.[228]

Kurdish parties remained regional due to the nationwide 10 percent election threshold. To make it to the parliament, they were required to be in an unofficial electoral alliance or fielding deputy candidates as independents.[229] Firstly, 15 MPs were expelled from the Social Democratic Populist Party (Turkish: *Sosyaldemokrat Halkçı Parti*, SHP) for attending a Kurdish conference in Paris, and the HEP was founded. The HEP later formed an unofficial electoral alliance with the SHP of Erdal İnönü for the 1991 elections, and 22 HEP members secured MP seats in the Turkish Grand Assembly (Güney, 2002; Uzun, 2014) which made the HEP and the first openly Kurdish ethno nationalist party of the eight until this day. However, in 1993, due to the aforementioned Anti-Terror Law of 1991, the HEP was the first of the five pro-Kurdish political parties banned by the Turkish constitutional court. Following the HEP's disbandment, Kurdish

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[226] See Chapter I, Section 2 for the *disproportionate representation and small opposition party challenges.*

[227] Since 2016 also Gulenists (Akgönül, 2020).

[228] For more detail on pro-Kurdish parties, refer to Table 5.

[229] See Chapter I section 2.2.1. on unofficial electoral alliances and 2.2.2. on fielding member of deputy candidates as independents in the Turkish elections.

MPs founded the Freedom and Democracy Party (Turkish: *Özgürlük ve Demokrasi Partisi*, ÖZDEP) in May 1993. On November 23 of that year, ÖZDEP was also outlawed, and the Democracy Party (Turkish: *Demokrasi Partisi*, DEP) was founded as a successor.

Nevertheless, following the Turkish parliament's immunity lift of the six MPs of DEP, these MPs were sentenced to 15 years in prison on charges of treason and affiliation with the PKK. As a result, the DEP was banned in 1994 by the Court. Some other members of the party escaped to Europe and built the first bricks of the Kurdistan Parliament in Exile in 1995 in the Hague, the Netherlands (HDP Europe, 2021a), which is known as the Kurdistan National Congress in the Diaspora (Kurdish: *Kongreya Neteweyî ya Kurdistanê*, KNC or KNK) today.[230]

Even though the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) charged Turkey for banning these Kurdish political parties unlawfully (see Table 5), the Turkish judicial authorities kept the trend alive, as the People's Democracy Party (Turkish: *Halkın Demokrasi Partisi*, HADEP), established in 1994, was shut down in 2003. The Democratic People's Party (Turkish: *Demokratik Halk Partisi*, DEHAP) was founded in 2007 as a successor of the HADEP even before the HADEP was disbanded. The HADEP, like its predecessors, was under constitutional pressure following its rise. Therefore, the DEHAP was formed as a substitute and remained inactive until the HADEP was, as expected, banned in 2003. Forty-six of HADEP's founding members were banned from political activities (HDP Europe, 2021a). The DEHAP was also sued to be prohibited by the Constitutional Court. Before waiting for the result of the case opened against the party to shut down, the DEHAP dissolved itself and re-formed under the name of the Democratic Society Party (Turkish: *Demokratik Toplum Partisi*, DTP) with the veteran Kurdish politicians upon their release from prison in 2004 concerning their alleged support for the PKK under the roof of the HADEP. The DEHAP, like its predecessors, despite getting 6.2 percent of the total votes in the 2002 general elections, failed to surpass the 10 percent national threshold (see Figures 7, 9 and 10). If there had been no threshold, DEHAP would have represented its supporters by securing 30 seats in the Turkish grand assembly.

To overcome the national threshold obstacle in the 2007 and 2011 legislative elections, respectively, the DTP, DEHAP's successor, and the Democratic Regions Party (Turkish: *Barış*

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[230] The KNC and the Kurdistan Parliament in Exile will be detailed below.

ve Demokrasi Partisi, BDP), the DTP's successor, chose to circumvent the threshold by fielding independent candidates where these parties regionally had strong voter bases. Firstly, for the 2007 elections, the DTP became the strongest ally of the bloc called the 'Thousand Hope Candidates' and secured 20 MPs[231] in the parliament, forming a party group with the party name. And then, for the 2011 elections, the BDP joined the 'Labour, Democracy and Freedom Bloc' as the most potent ally. This time, 36 MPs from the BDP entered the Turkish Grand Assembly and formed the BDP officially.[232] The legal prosecutions were not limited to the party bans only. A number of members and affiliated individuals from each of these pro-Kurdish parties that was banned or obliged to be dissolved have continued to be arrested, media outlets were closed, and affiliated organisations were shut down.

The Democratic Regions Party (Turkish: *Demokratik Bölgeler Partisi*, DBP) was founded in 2008 as the successor of the BDP, which was banned in 2014. The Peoples' Democratic Party (Turkish: *Halkların Demokratik Partisi*, HDP) was also founded as a successor of the BDP in 2012. Both parties are still active today as fraternal parties serving different purposes, as the BDP has run for the local elections since 2014 while the HDP runs for the general elections.

2.2.1.2. The HDP period

When the democratic socialist and anti-capitalist HDP was founded in Turkey as the political project of the Peoples' Democratic Congress (Turkish: *Halkların Demokratik Kongresi*, HDK) in 2012, it was welcomed as the successor of the banned pro-Kurdish political parties by the political Kurds in and outside of Turkey. However, unlike its predecessors, the HDP by foundation did not claim to be solely a Kurdish nationalist political party but rather a pro-minority party with a greater emphasis on the Kurdish question. Founded in 2011, the HDK, which gave birth to the HDP in Turkey, is a union of various left-wing political movements, organisations, and parties in Turkey with the objective of bringing a platform so as to gather the oppressed, excluded, and ethnic and religious minority groups to create an alternative politics in

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[231] In total, 26 'Thousand Hope Candidates' entered the parliament. This was the first time in the history of the Grand Assembly that many independents made their way to the parliament.

[232] Law on Political Parties Article 22 permits a minimum of 20 members of parliament to form political party groups in the parliament.

Turkey (Güneş, 2018).[233] The HDK, regardless of the social base of its more than 30 components, adopts an organisational style that is based on equal representation. The HDK aims to represent the Kurdish minority first, which HDP inherits significantly, and then to represent other recognised/unrecognised minority groups such as the Alevis, Armenians, and LGBT people with a "green party" claim (HDP Europe, 2021b). Relying on its pro-Kurdish yet multi-ethnic and multi-religious foundation, the HDP's first success came with the results of the June 2015 legislative elections as a national party instead of running independent candidates like its predecessors DTP and BDP, making it to the parliament for the first time with 13.1 percent of the total vote share (see Figure 1).[234] HDP's resounding success made it clear that the HDP reached many non-Kurds, as it aimed to, considering HDP's predecessors typically obtained 5 to 7 percent of the votes (see Figures 7 and 9). This also meant that for the first time, a pro-Kurdish party made it possible to overcome the Turkishness-prioritising ethno-linguistic legacy which had been envisioned as required; the HDP wanted to be part of the political history of this country and made it to the Turkish Grand Assembly despite the predominant-party 'democracy' of the AKP.

The HDP's June 2015 election relative victory also translated into a significant loss for the AKP. Until the June 2015 legislative elections, the AKP won three consecutive polls by a landslide in 2002, 2007, and 2011, thereby solidifying a "predominant party in a competitive democracy" (Çarkoğlu & Yıldırım, 2015, p. 57; Sayarı, 2016). Although the AKP remained the largest group in the parliament, the HDP's unexpected entrance to the parliament, which Bardakçi (2016, p. 4) calls a "game-changer", stopped the AKP from winning an outright majority, which necessitated either a coalition or governing as a minority government. Furthermore, according to the election results, the far-right Pan-Turkish Nationalist Movement Party (Turkish: *Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi*, MHP) had equal seats with the HDP, creating another tension between the ultra-nationalist and the pro-HDP groups. By being in two ends with the HDP, it was not possible for the MHP to be part of a coalition with the HDP (Al Jazeera, 2015b, August 20). The coalition

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[233] Some studies interpret the HDP's extended range in its party agenda as "trying to become Turkey's party" (original phrase in Turkish: *Türkiyelileşmek*) (Köse, 2015).

[234] The August 2014 Presidential Election was the first popular election of the Turkish president and was the first election that the HDP participated in. The HDP's candidate Selahattin Demirtaş gained 9.76 percent of the votes (see Figure 13). This result already signalled the HDP's potential to surpass the legislative election threshold (Çarkoğlu & Yıldırım, 2015)

talks among the opposition parties and the AKP's reluctance[235] to be part of a coalition with either of the parliament parties made the snap election necessary (Nardelli et al., 2015, October 28). The reason why this snap election was held, however, carries a critical importance that constitutes the reasons behind the electoral realignment in such a short amount of time. From the opposition's point of view, the snap election of November 2015 stemmed from the intentionally failed coalition talks.

November 1, 2015, was announced in August as the chosen date for the snap election. However, between the announcement and the election, the Turkish context changed drastically. A suicide bombing which killed 33 civil society organisation members in Suruç in July 2015, and the Turkish army fight with ISIS in Iraqi Kurdistan while disturbing the presence of the Democratic Union Party (Kurdish: *Partiya Yekîtiya Demokrat*, PYD), a PKK-affiliated organisation, through air and artillery strikes ended the peace process in July 2015 that had been in progress since 2013 between the Turkish state and the Kurdish PKK (Sayarı, 2016). Lastly, the 2015 Ankara bombings, a suicide bombing attack during the "Labour, Peace and Democracy Rally" (Turkish: *Emek, Barış, Demokrasi Mitingi*) co-organised by the HDP,[236] killed 109 civilians.[237] Following the Ankara bombings, the HDP blamed the AKP, and the imprisoned former co-leader of the HDP, Selahattin Demirtaş, stated:

> Is it possible that in a state with such a powerful intelligence, there is no knowledge of this [the bombings]? We are faced with a state mentality that has become a mafia, has become a murderer and practices it like a serial killer. They are trying to captivate society. … The police under your command [the AKP] are gassing the wounded; what kind of government have you become? You did it in front of our eyes in Diyarbakır [Suruç bombing]. While people

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[235] For more on the AKP's predominant party system strategies from the case study of the November 2015 snap election in Turkey, see Sayarı (2016).

[236] The other main organisers of the "Labour, Peace and Democracy Rally" included the Confederation of Progressive Trade Unions of Turkey (Turkish: *Türkiye Devrimci İşçi Sendikaları Konfederasyonu*, DISK), the Union of Chambers of Turkish Engineers and Architects (Turkish: *Türk Mühendis ve Mimar Odaları Birliği,* TMMOB), the Turkish Medical Association (Turkish: *Türk Tabipleri Birliği*, TTB) and the Confederation of Public Workers' Unions (Turkish: *Kamu Emekçileri Sendikaları Konfederasyonu,* KESK).

[237] The murderers' connections with ISIS are to this day unclear.

are drowning, while the wounded are being transported, tear gas capsules were thrown [by the police forces]. Can there be such a thing? The scene is tough to take. … We will get through these days with the resistance of those who do not give up due to the oppression, but we will also hold them accountable within the framework of the law. (Evrensel, 2015, October 10)

As the snap election was held under the shadow of the terror attacks in Suruç, Diyarbakır, and Ankara, and the military action against the PKK's PYD, the political agenda in the country dramatically shifted within a couple of months, which benefitted the AKP substantially (Çarkoğlu & Yıldırım, 2015) while decreasing the HDP's total votes within the country (Grigoriadis, 2016).[238] On the other hand, the out-of-country votes for the HDP increased (see Figure 1). All in all, the AKP was once again able to form a single-party government (Bardakçi, 2016).

The HDP in the following legislative election in 2018 also bypassed the threshold and secured seats at the parliament (see Figure 1). However, from November 2015 on, amongst others the legislative efforts under the flexibility of the anti-terror law to disable the HDP increased (see also Kaya, 2019).[239] Since then, over 17,000 HDP members or affiliated people have been taken under custody, and as many as 5,000 are still imprisoned.[240] 13 MPs have been arrested, including the former co-leaders of the party, Selahattin Demirtaş[241] and Figen Yüksekdağ.[242] From 2015 to today, over 1000 immunity dossiers against 59 MPs have been voted at the

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[238] Although the HDP's decreased voter share of the HDP had a number of reasons, from election fraud to the mass arrest of the HDP sympathizers and members, the idea that put the blame on the ISIS attacks on the HDP rallies was common among the public (Graeber, 2015, November 18).

[239] In addition to the legislative efforts, the attacks that targeted the HDP since the first election victory in 2015 has increased in number. A detailed report on the September 2015 attacks can be found at the following link provided by the HDP: https://www.hdp.org.tr/en/attacks-against-the-peoples-democratic-party-since-september-6th-2015/8920/

[240] For more on the recent actions that are carried on in relation to the HDP, see the report of the HDP titled *Seizure of Will and Realities on Trustees* (2021) at the following link: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1hX1KkjZiShso4nVf6pUqBFdBlMH5U578/view

[241] On December 22, 2020, the ECtHR judgement ordered the immediate release of Demirtaş, who is in pre-trial detention since he was arrested in November 2016 (McKernan, 2020, December 22; Selahattin Demirtaş v. Turkey No. 2, Application no. 14305/17, December 22, 2020).

[242] "Closure cases were brought against seven of the 10 [pro-Kurdish/Kurdish] parties and five of them were closed. Almost all of the party chairs served time in prison" (Bianet, 2017, May 3).

parliament (HDP, 2016). Between 2015 and 2018, over 100 HDP municipalities' elected personnel were removed and replaced by trustees appointed by the Interior Ministry. Ninety-three of those were jailed, and as many as 16 HDP mayors are still behind bars, while some are in exile, mainly in Western European countries (HDP, 2019). A number of primarily local Kurdish media apparatuses were banned. Over 200 libraries, language centres, and Kurdish women's organisations directly or indirectly connected to the HDP were shut down.[243]

The disbandment destiny of the pro-Kurdish parties, this time for the HDP, was given a start by the prosecution in March 2021. Moreover, the prosecutors seek to penalise 687 HDP members, including MPs, and leading politicians such as Pervin Buldan, Figen Yüksekdağ, and the still-imprisoned Selahattin Demirtaş from a minimum of a five-year ban on political participation (to elect and to be elected) to a maximum of life imprisonment without parole. The indictments raised against the HDP and its members are not any different from those against the predecessor parties made through anti-terrorist legislation, such as undermining the Republic of Turkey's integrity and involvement in pro-PKK terrorist activities (HDP, 2016). The claims have not surprised the party members but nevertheless created an outrage due to the lack of evidence provided by the prosecutors and the overall arbitrariness (Can, 2021, June 17; DW, 2021, March 20; OTSA, 2021, March 29).

As of today [June 15, 2022], there has been no decision made by the Turkish courts. However, the pro-Kurdish HDP members and the partisans expect the party to be banned and the members to be jailed or get a party ban due to previous experiences. Nevertheless, they also state that they are prepared and experienced and will not step down or fade away; to the contrary, they will let the legacy that is a search for democratic grounds for a peaceful Turkey continue with another party (see OTSA, 2021, March 29).

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[243] See the speech by Hişyar Özsoy, the HDP co-spokesperson for Foreign Affairs and an MP, at the panel on "the Judicial Coup against the HDP: Authoritarianism and the Law in Turkey" (OTSA, 2021, 3:24-15:50 mins.).

2.2.1.3. Turkey-originating Kurds in Europe, Germany, and France

The 1960s were also essential for Kurds to open their nationhood towards European states. Turkey's diasporas in Europe provide a ground to display the segmentation between the Turkish and Kurdish groups from Turkey. In the wake of the bilateral labour agreements for guest workers, Kurdish emigrants from Turkey, like the Turks, began to flow steadily into Germany from 1961 on. Until the 1980s, the constellations did not show visible factions in terms of ethnic identities; instead, then-permanent workers were gathered under Turkish citizenship and were called "Turkish workers" (Østergaard-Nielsen, 2016, p. 46). Like other economic migrants, Kurds were among the ones who established workers' associations and joined the trade unions (Dudley & Lloyd, 2006, pp. 57–58). Thus, it would not be wrong to claim that parallel developments were observed among the Turkish and Kurdish organisations that have been active in Europe until the political turmoil launched in Turkey.

Turkey's political unrest of the 1970s –the 1971 military memorandum, the Maraş Massacre in 1978, [244] and the 1980 Turkish military coup – brought out asylum seekers including but not limited to Kurds, Alevis, leftists, members of banned (mainly Kurdish) political parties, union members, and journalists. These 'guilty' Turkish citizens generated a new type of wave in great numbers towards Western Europe, and then the changes in the diaspora organisations started (Dudley & Lloyd, 2006; Rigoni, 1998). The escalation of the armed conflict throughout the 1980s between the Kurdish guerrilla organisation PKK and the Turkish government overlapped with the post-1980 coup period, becoming the major basis of the political asylum applications to the European countries. Many of these political asylum applicants from Turkey had direct links with the PKK and/or claimed to be affiliated with the PKK or other Kurdish movement initiations (Karagöz, 2017; Van Bruinessen, 2000a). Kirişçi (2004, p. 289) states that many of the asylum seekers were the cadre of PKK organisations in Europe. A high proportion of the granted refugee statuses of politically motivated migrants gave rise, increasingly visibly, to socially and politically fragmented Turkey-originating communities in European public space

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[244] In December 1978, between 105 to 180 Alevis and leftist groups were killed by the religious extremists and neo-fascist Grey Wolves in the city of Kahramanmaraş, Turkey.

(Sirkeci, 2006). [245] The largest politically driven groups chose Germany first, then France, as their destination countries, yet proportionally, the Kurds from Turkey chose the UK, Finland, and Switzerland the most (Yener-Roderburg & Yetiş, forthcoming). Because for the newcomers, in particular, these countries made the transition and settling in easier due to the Turkish and Kurdish economic migrants that arrived more than two decades earlier (Institut kurde de Paris, 2016; Østergaard-Nielsen, 2016), this also facilitated the activation of the diaspora organisations for the political struggle in Turkey (Van Bruinessen, 2000a).

Before the 2000s, the Kurdish community from Turkey in Germany was already visible and politically remarkably active. Estimates of the early 1990s present that in Germany, there were 7,500 active PKK members and 40,000 to 50,000 sympathisers (Hoch, 1994), making Europe the centre of the cultivation of the Kurdish movement (Curtis, 2005, p. 8). The 1999 capture of the leader of the PKK, Abdullah Öcalan, led to another drift that increased the number of sympathisers in Germany but also in the other Western states, starting with France, Belgium, and Great Britain. From the 1980s to this day, more than one million Turkish nationals have sought political asylum in Europe, a considerable amount of which consist of the Kurds (İçduygu, 2004). Furthermore, the increase in the number of self-identifying political Kurds of Turkish origin in Europe also elevated the number of self-discovered Kurds of Turkish origin who felt closer to these political refugees than to the Turkish guest worker emigrants from Turkey (Demir, 2017, p. 61; Leggewie, 1996, p. 79).[246] Van Bruinessen (2000a), on that matter, points out that "the awareness of Kurdistan as a homeland, and the Kurds as a distinct people, has often been strongest in those Kurds who lived elsewhere, among people of different languages and cultures" (p. 67). Certain events such as the assassination of three Kurdish women activists in 2013 at the office of the Kurdish Information Centre (French: *centre d'information du Kurdistan*) in Paris[247] and the siege of Kobani by the Islamic State of Iraq and

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[245] For the early stages of the Turkish immigrants' political mobilisation until the 2000s along with the new migrant and refugee waves, see Østergaard-Nielsen (2016).

[246] For a further understanding of Kurdish diasporas' mobilisation in various countries that strengthened and shaped the Kurdish cause, see Akkaya (2012), Ayata (2011), Eccarius-Kelly (2017), Lyon and Uçarer (2001), Østergaard-Nielsen (2016), and Wahlbeck (1999).

[247] Sakine Cansız, a founding member of the PKK and a KNC member; Fidan Doğan, a Paris representative of the KNC; and Leyla Şöylemez, a youth representative of the KNC were killed execution-style by Ömer Güney, who died three years after the assassination due to a terminal illness at a hospital in Paris, which closed the murder case

the Levant (ISIL) or the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) or the Islamic State (IS) between October 2014 and January 2015[248] also played a critical role in waking up the dormant diaspora Kurds and unifying Kurdish activism in Europe to a greater extent (Avrupa Postası, 2013, January 13; Eccarius-Kelly, 2017; Marchand, 2017; Özsoy, 2013).

Even though it was not necessarily easy for the Kurdish community considering most of them had residency status as refugees, the Kurdish diaspora was dynamic and fruitful in establishing organisations that varied categorically and in reach. The broader constellation of the Kurds from Turkey has been formed in a partially decentralised and bottom-up fashion by ethnic Kurds who were formerly Turkish citizens. Yet these formations varied from a local, community-based association to the national research institute in the diaspora (Yener-Roderburg, 2020). Despite the nuances in their initial founding aims and functioning strategies, they were (and are) to maintain Kurdish solidarity at home and abroad, to make the Kurdish identity and the hardships at 'home' known to Western public opinion, and to protect as well as promote the Kurdish culture and language abroad and at 'home'. In most cases, these organisations act together as they share members. Moreover, they recognise each other as the components of the Kurdish solidarity network, which they organise and take part in together through annual Nawroz celebrations, rallies, charity events, marches, campaigns, sports events, informative panels, and so on.

Due to generating the largest known community sphere following the tensions between the Kurdish guerilla organisation PKK and the Turkish government in the 1980s, the diaspora organisations that were established mainly by the refugee Kurds from Turkey and their descendants in exile – the Kurdish cultural centres locally, these cultural centres' umbrella organisations NAV-DEM in Germany and CDK-F in France nationally, and lastly the coordinator of these umbrella organisations, the European Kurdish Democratic Societies Congress (Kurdish: *Kongreya Civakên Demokratîk a Kurdîstanîyên Ewrupa*, KCDK-E) – regionally appear as the prominent trend-setter for the Kurdish diaspora in conflict in the country

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until 2019 (ANF News, 2017, January 24; DW, 2013, January 11). In 2019 the investigation was reopened after the families of the victims asked the French authorities to look at whether Turkish agents were involved in killings (France24, 2019, May 15).

[248] On the ISIL siege of Kobani and the rise of Rojava, see Eccarius-Kelly (2017) and Federici (2015).

cases.[249] However, in addition to these organisations, there are a number of other significant organisations set by the Kurdish diaspora and for the Kurdish diaspora mobilisation for the homeland. These organisations are highly influential for the Kurdish community as they contribute to the knowledge on Kurds in the host countries and raise awareness of the issues concerning Kurdistan (Çakır-Kılınçoğlu, 2020). The KNC or KNK, officially established in 1999 in Brussels, Belgium;[250] the European Kurdish Democratic Societies Congress (Kurdish: *Kongreya Civakên Demokratîk a Kurdîstanîyên Ewrupa*); the Kurdish Institute of Paris founded in 1983 in Paris, France (French: *l'Institut kurde*);[251] and the Union of Kurdish Associations in Germany (Kurdish: *Komeleya Karkerên Kurdistan*, KOMKAR) founded in 1979 in Frankfurt, Germany,[252] are a few of the many organisations that have been established mainly through the refugee Kurds and their descendants in exile.

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[249] Studies such as Çakır-Kılınçoğlu (2020) show that the diaspora Kurds, depending on their country of origin, have different approaches on the Kurds in diaspora and Kurds at home. In her significant biographical work, Çakır-Kılınçoğlu (2020) underlines that "established and transnationally active political organisation is critical for the persistence of activist biographies" (p. 216); as in the case of the PKK for the Turkey-originating Kurds, this may likely lead the diaspora Kurds of Turkish origin to underline the "aggressive political struggle for the Kurds in diaspora" rather than "to improve the civil and democratic rights of Kurds in Germany" as, in her case, a Kurd of Iranian origin (p. 215).

[250] KNC, a temporary arrangement based in Brussels, was founded 3.5 months after Öcalan was arrested until the Kurds have full independence or substantive autonomy, established by exiled Kurdish and Assyrian politicians, lawyers, and activists as the successor of the Kurdistan Parliament in Exile (Hevian, 2013). The KNC, according to Van Bruinessen (2000b) "may prove to represent a major step in Kurdish nation-building that would not have been possible in Kurdistan itself but only in the diaspora" (p. 19). KNC consists of six members covering almost the entire Kurdistan region together with Assyrians (Iraq, Iran, Turkey) as well as diaspora Kurds (Europe and North America), and the civil society organisations that raise awareness of the Kurdish cause (Hevian, 2013). The Parliament in Exile aimed at generating a platform for the selected representatives to be able to represent the Kurdish people involved in the national struggle and, first and foremost, to work on gaining international support, which transferred its aims to KNC after it resolved. (http://archive.apc.org/mideast.kurds/msg00674.html) KNC acts as a coordinator, of among other efforts, the freedom for Ocalan movements in Europe as well as working on removing the PKK from the EU's list of designated terrorist groups (Taş, 2015).

[251] The Kurdish Institute claims itself to be an independent, non-political, secular organisation which aims at promoting the Kurdish language, history, and culture and to contribute to the integration of Kurdish immigrants to Europe. The Institute has 15 board directors, primarily consisting of senior academics from all over Europe (mostly from France) and the United States (Institute kurde, 2021). The Institute has important archival data on Kurds at its premises, which are open to public use (Van Bruinessen, 2000b).

[252] KOMKAR was established as a partner of the Marxist-Leninist Revolutionary Party of Kurdistan (Kurdish: *Partiya Sosyalista Kurdistan a Tırkiye*, PSK or PSKT), which is one of the banned Kurdish political parties in Turkey, known for its clashes with the PKK (Güneş, 2013). When founded in 1979, KOMKAR emerged as an umbrella organisation of 30 Kurdish associations (Sezgin, 2020). KOMKAR is still active in Europe in more than a few countries, including Germany and France, having 11 chapters in these countries and reaching up to 250,000 people from different nations. Since its foundation, KOMKAR has adopted a broad diplomatic approach to

As stated earlier, due to the absence of the Kurds from the national census, the only obtainable number of the former citizens of Turkey with Kurdish ethnic background would not be sufficient to make general claims about Kurds' actual population outside their 'homeland'. Additionally, the independent community groups that have coalesced around the Kurds from Turkey in Germany and France are hard to name or count, and, accordingly, so are their members. Moreover, due to the PKK ban in Germany and France in 1993, which the EU solidified in 2002, most PKK-affiliated Kurdish associations in these countries have either changed their names or dissolved and joined other fringe groups and managed to keep their base supporters. Nonetheless, it is known to the host country authorities that the organisations, including the ones mentioned above, have a direct and indirect connection to the PKK, which has even led to some of these associations (the most known of which is NAV-DEM) being under surveillance in Germany by BvF since 2019 (Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz [BvF], 2019).

At this point, various kinds of organisations affiliated with the NAV-DEM and CDK-F, most prominently local Kurdish cultural centres, spread in Germany and France, came into prominence due to their capacity to generate the largest diasporic political field for the Kurds. They also attract the more significant Kurdish population under their bottom-up structured foundations, which enables us to approach them as the places where the intense engagement of the Kurdish diaspora in the *known community sphere*[253] is mainly taking place. The Kurdish diaspora in Germany and France provides a valuable example by being active in all three

influence politics in the homeland, seeking the support of all political tendencies not only limited to Turkey's Kurdistan region but, as its name suggests, to the Kurdistan region as a whole and the Kurds in Germany (Abadan-Unat, 2011, p. 192). It is believed to represent "a large number of 'guest worker children' rediscovering their Kurdishness in the diaspora" (Østergaard-Nielsen, 2016, p. 46). KOMKAR in principle assists the integration of any migrants, yet according to an interview with one of its members, KOMKAR instead sticks to its second objective, that is, to support the Kurdish freedom movement in Kurdistan as well as the promotion of the Kurdish language and culture, public relations and lobbying for the homeland (BfDT, 2018). One of the most common political actions of KOMKAR was to promote the northern territory of Iraq's independence referendum led by Masoud Barzani, which provides a good example of their stance (KOMKAR, 2017).

[253] Nicholas Van Hear and Robin Cohen (2017) have brought out three spheres of engagement to explain the role of diasporas in conflict through public and private places: *the household/extended family sphere, the known community sphere*, and lastly *the imagined community*. The first sphere is the "largely private and personal sphere of 'the household and the extended family'"; the second is the "the more public sphere of the 'known community', by which is meant collectivities of people who know one another or know of one another"; and lastly, the "largely public sphere of the 'imagined community', which includes the transnational political field, among other arenas" (pp. 172–173).

spheres identified by Van Hear and Cohen (2017), yet the *known community sphere* would aptly describe the associational life that the Kurds have in the diaspora, which principally could also be applied to their involvement in home-party mobilisation from their host countries.

In time, between the Turks and Kurds from Turkey, ethnonational segmentation with the influx of the political Kurds to the host countries became more visible. At the same time, the former leaned towards more to local Turkey-initiated associations, mostly towards DITIB where Turkishness and Sunni Islamic values were more prominent; the latter started establishing ethno-nationalist associations to "re-establish social linkages ruptured during war, and rebuilding trust and confidence" (Van Hear & Cohen, 2017, p. 173) among the newly emerging community.

With no intention of dismissing the importance of the unmentioned Kurdish activist factions in the *known community sphere*, some of which are mentioned above, for the purposes of this work, as stated earlier, the most prominent Kurdish-diaspora umbrella organisations that also represent the greater part of the Kurdish groupings in Germany and France, and which obtained a pro-Kurdish stance following the non-resident Turkish enfranchisement, will be historically scrutinised. These organisations are the roof organisation, the KCD-E, in Europe and its chapters in Germany (NAV-DEM) and France (CDK-F).

KCDK-E (aka KON-KURD)

The European Kurdish Democratic Societies Congress (Kurdish: *Kongreya Civakên Demokratîk a Kurdîstanîyên Ewrupa*, KCDK-E), until 2014 known as the Confederation of Kurdish Associations in Europe (Kurdish: *Konfederasyona Komelên Kurd Li Avrupa*, KON-KURD), is the leading Kurdish umbrella organisation in Europe, founded in 1993 in Brussels, and still has its headquarters in Belgium (Keles, 2015; Mügge, 2012a). Turkey at the forefront, including Germany and France, consider KCDK-E "to be little more than a front for PKK" (Gunter, 2018, p. 185), and by being a member of the KNC, it is also seen as an overseas underground organisation of the PKK (Gunter, 2018). KCDK-E aims at lobbying for the Kurdish homeland from various channels, including being politically active toward governments of the resident countries (Gunter, 2018) and raising awareness in the resident countries of the human rights violations in Kurdistan.

KCDK-E is considered the largest organisation of Kurds in exile, which primarily consists of Turkish Kurdistani members, with several chapters in Europe as well as on other continents; Australian Kurdish Federation or Australia Kurdish Federation (Kurdish: *Civaka Demokratîk a Kurd a Awustralya*) in Australia and the Federation of the Kurdish Associations (French: *Federation des Associations Kurdes*) in Canada are known active organisations in their regions (Australian Kurdish Federation, 2021; Canada Kurds, 2021). The most influential and widespread associational members of KCDK-E include but are not limited to NAV-DEM in Germany, CDK-F in France, Federation of Kurdish Associations in Switzerland (Kurdish: *Fedarasyona Yekîtiya Komalen Gelê Kurd li Swîsra,* FEKAR-Kurdistan), and Federation of the Kurdish Associations in Belgium (Turkish: *Belçika Kürt Dernekleri* Federasyonu, FEK-BEL) (CDK-F, 2021; Gunter, 2018; Kurdish Institute of Brussels, 2012; Ministerium des Innern des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen, 2017). According to Gunter (2018), KCDK-E reached more than 200,000 members by 2017. In addition, around 15 KCDK-E affiliated television stations serve Euro-Kurds, such as Fırat News Agency, Roj-Group, Mezopotamya TV, and Kurdistan TV (Gunter, 2018).

NAV-DEM (aka YEK-KOM)

The Democratic Social Centre of the Kurds in Germany (Kurdish: *Navenda Civaka Demokratîk ya Kurdên li Almanyayê*, NAV-DEM), known until 2014 as Federation of Kurdish Associations in Germany (Kurdish: *Yekitiya Komalên Kurd li Elmanya*, YEK-KOM),[254] is the joint organisation for the over 250 Kurdish official formations dominated by former political refugees across Germany, now mostly legal residents, that have been active since 1979. These associations cover various fields that are roof organisations to many other local branches seen as PKK-affiliated organisations by the German authorities (Ministerium des Innern des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen, 2017). These organisations include, to name only a few, religious communities such as the Islamic Society of Kurdistan (Kurdish: *Civaka Îslamiya Kurdistanê*, CÎK),[255] the Democratic Alevi Federation (Turkish: Demokratik Alevi Federasyonu, German:

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[254] The predecessor of YEK-KOM was the Federation of Cultural Associations of the Patriotic Workers of Kurdistan (Kurdish: *Federasyona Komeleyên Kurd li Fransayê*, FEYKA) until 1993. For more explanation, see below.

[255] Civaka Islamiya Kurdistan Genel Merkezi (2021).

Föderation der demokratischen Aleviten, FEDA),[256] and the Federation of Yazidi Unions (Kurdish: *Federasyona Komeleyên Êzdiyan*, German: *Föderation der yezidischen Vereine*, FKÊ); [257] as well as initiatives and civil society groups such as the European Kurdish Women's Movement (Kurdish: *Tevgera Jinên Kurd li Ewropayê*, German: *Kurdische Frauenbewegung in Europa*, TJK-E),[258] the youth organisation Movement of the Free Youth of Kurdistan (Kurdish: *Komalên Ciwan*, or *Ciwanên Azad*, German: *Gemeinschaften der Jugend*),[259] the Association of Students from Kurdistan (Kurdish: *Yekîtiya Xwendekarên Kurdistan*, German: *Verband der Studierenden aus Kurdistan*, YXK),[260] and the Association of Parents from Kurdistan in Germany (Kurdish: *Yekitiya Malbatên ji Kurdîstanê li Almanyayê*, German: *Verein der Eltern aus Kurdistan in Deutschland*, YEK-MAL).[261] Through the mentioned organisations and dozens of others, NAV-DEM is assumed to be reaching the largest Kurdish population in Germany and worldwide in the diaspora. Yet the primary of those that share the members the most with other organisations are the local Kurdish cultural community centres spread across Germany. Therefore, despite the strong connections between the organisations under NAV-DEM, they appear to focus more on coordinating the associations around Germany that are affiliated with them. In other words, this longstanding umbrella organisation aims to unify the uncoordinated and fragmented Kurdish population of Germany – which the organisation claims is more than one million people in total – and to satisfy the needs of the community as well as to generate a ground to make their voices heard in the political sphere (NAV-DEM, 2021).

The associations under NAV-DEM are officially independent of each other; however, due to the already existing ties between the former PKK guerrillas and sympathisers that have spread to Germany, the connection between these umbrella organisations is vital, especially in times of crisis and of solidarity need. The Kurdish umbrella organisations in the diaspora regularly meet to exchange views and discuss the current agenda. Therefore, even though it is still possible to

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[256] FEDA (2021).

[257] FKÊ (2021).

[258] Jinen Kurd (2021).

[259] Ciwanen Azad Almanya (2021).

[260] YXK (2021).

[261] YEK-MAL (2021).

talk about the members of these institutions, the number of the members does still not reflect the actual reach of the organisations. Membership in these institutions does not necessarily carry any significance, as not many people pay regular monthly fees. Rather, the importance is the active engagement of *Hevals*,[262] friends or comrades, in the events that the very same people also organise. Informants from various associations linked to NAV-DEM stated that to keep a member book solely to fulfil the authorities' legal requirements as an official organisation. Furthermore, as noted earlier, some of the members are active in more than one organisation, which may lead to miscalculating the actual number of the total active members. Lastly, the geographical closeness between the Kurdish diaspora groups residing in different countries gives rise to a blurred border regarding the organisations' limits in the reach of their transnational political activities. Therefore, the similarities in their functioning and their supporter profiles are becoming more expected.

CDK-F (aka FEYKA)

The Federation of Cultural Associations of the Patriotic Workers of Kurdistan (Kurdish: *Federasyona Komeleyên Kurd li Fransayê*, French: *Fédération des associations Kurdes de France*, FEYKA), known since 2014 as the Kurdish Democratic Council in France (French: *Conseil Démocratique kurde en France*, CDK-F), has been the largest Kurdish umbrella organisation affiliated with the PKK and Turkey's pro-Kurdish political parties in France since 2001 (Akgönül, 2020). FEYKA is known for its strong existence in France until 2014; however, it was first founded in Germany and then appeared in France. The YEK-KOM, as mentioned above, was established following the banning of FEYKA in Germany (Yaş, 2021). These FEYKA associations in their early years focused more on street demonstration and the occupation of buildings in both country cases (Rigoni, 1998). However, even then, FEYKA's affiliation with the PKK was known to the authorities. This affiliation would spell the end of FEYKA. Due to the dozens of attacks in 1993 in Germany that targeted Turkish cultural and business centres and diplomatic missions in response to Turkey's oppressive sanctions on Kurds

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[262] In Kurdish, the word *Heval* means 'friend', 'companion on a long journey', and is widely used among Kurdish political parties and organisations that would suggest 'comrade'.

in Turkey,[263] Germany not only classified the PKK as a terrorist organisation – as did many other countries, including the EU and NATO members (Østergaard-Nielsen, 2003a) – but also banned a number of PKK-affiliated organisations in its territory (Jansen, 2014, August 30).

CDK-F's founding aims do not differ from those of NAV-DEM, which is not surprising considering that both organisations were under one umbrella, FEYKA, until 1993 and in close contact since then. The Kurdish diaspora in France is the second largest outside of Kurdistan after the Kurds in Germany, making the CDK-F the umbrella organisation for the second largest Kurdish population in the diaspora. Accordingly, like in the case of NAV-DEM in Germany, CDK-F appears as the primary trend-setter at the local level in France on issues concerning Kurds. The largest political gatherings regarding Kurds were mobilised by CDK-F or its predecessor FEYKA's local branches in France, ensuring the organisations' reach.[264]

CDK-F's fundamental aims could be listed in part as the protection, preservation, and promotion of the Kurdish language and culture and the inclusion of the Kurds in France. Furthermore, CDK-F aims to generate solidarity for those who face difficulties in exile and helps to maintain the bond between the members of the Kurdish diaspora and the homeland.[265] CDK-F currently has 24 official chapters in France that mainly consist of Kurdish cultural centres, plus the Democratic Alevi Federation-France (Kurdish: *Federasyona Demokratika Elewi*, FEDA-France) and the Kurdish Islamist Sunni Movement-France (Kurdish: *Civaka Îslamiya Kurdistan Fransa*, CÎK) chapters (CDK-F, 2021). In addition, CDK-F has 700 council members, most of whom were ex-guerillas or PKK sympathisers, and reaches around 3200 members that pay their membership fees regularly in the whole of France (CDK-F, 2020). However, as stated above, it is believed that the actual active participants that form the CDK-F

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[263] The Global Terrorism Database does not have reliable data on the 1993 attacks in Germany as the perpetrators are coded unknown (START, 2019).

[264] In 2011 over 15,000 Kurds residing in France and neighbouring countries took part in the CDK-F organised march to protest, among other matters, Ocalan's isolated imprisonment and Turkey's suppression on Kurds (RojBas Varto, 2011, October 8). In 2013, thousands of people gathered in response to the call of CDK-D following the assassination of the three Kurdish women activists (for more information see *supra note* 86) (Avrupa Postası, 2013).

In 2019, due to Turkey's military attack on Southern Kurdistan, over 20,000 people marched after the call of the CDK-F and other affiliated organisations (France24, 2019, October 12).

[265] Interviewee no. 41.

are higher than the number of official members. These organisations also accommodate undocumented migrants and the partisan Kurds that are mobile in Europe.[266]

Like NAV-DEM, CDK-F stresses the coordination of the associations affiliated with them that are spread across France and maintains a close relationship to the other roof organisations under KCDK-E. In other words, these longstanding umbrella organisations aim to unify the uncoordinated and fragmented Kurdish populations in France and Germany – which the organisations claim is more than one million people in total – and to satisfy the needs of the community, make the Kurdish culture and language known, and generate a national level of recognition for the Kurds' voices heard in the political sphere (CDK-F, 2021; NAV-DEM, 2021). Furthermore, the geographical closeness, especially with the help of the Schengen zone privilege of not requiring visas between the countries, strengthens and facilitates the transnational network between these groups. One of the known examples regarding this is the Öcalan Vigil. Both organisations act as the advocate of freedom for Abdullah Öcalan, the leader of the Kurdish movement and founder of the PKK, who has been imprisoned in Turkey since 1999 (CDK-F, 2021; NAV-DEM, 2021). The Strasbourg office of the CDK-F is partially responsible for the coordination of the Öcalan Vigil[267] that has been taking place in front of the Council of Europe and the European Committee for the Prevention of Tortures building in Strasbourg since June 25, 2012, reaching its 512th week as of April 11, 2022. Groups of activists from all over Europe take over the vigil every week, mainly from Germany (ANF News, 2021, May 4; ANF News, 2022, March 8). The accommodation needs of the guest activists are provided by members of the local CDK-F affiliated Kurdish cultural centre.[268] Translocally, as well as transnationally, the members of these organisations, meeting every so often for the same causes, present similarities not only in their structural functioning but also in their supporter profiles.

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[266] Interviewee no. 41.

[267] The Vigil is held daily and during it "leaflets prepared in different languages not only explain the Kurdish people's leader Abdullah Öcalan's paradigm but also draw attention to his 24 years of captivity. The action also protests the silence of Europe against the crimes against humanity committed by the Turkish state against the Kurdish people, while calling on the institutions to fulfil their responsibilities" (ANF News, 2022, March 8).

[268] Interviewee no. 38.

2.2.1.4. NAV-DEM and CDK-F as HDP's veritable remote-partisan organisations in Germany and France

This part aims to cover the institutional approach and strategies of NAV-DEM and CDK-F towards HDP throughout the Turkish elections in June 2015 and November 2015 and the 2018 general election, in which these organisations appeared as veritable in their loyalty to the party, acting as what Duverger calls a "militant member" (1976, p. 109) who

> regularly attend meetings, share in the spreading of the party's slogans, help to organise its propaganda, and prepare its electoral campaigns. … They are not to be confused with the leaders: they are not directors but executives; without them it would not even be possible to carry out any activities. (1976, pp. 109–110).

The qualitative data gathered from the pro-HDP individuals who are members of these organisations will be analysed for their incentives in the following chapter, Chapter III.

When the HDP was founded in Turkey as the political project of the Peoples' Democratic Congress (Turkish: *Halkların Demokratik Kongresi*, HDK) in 2012, it was welcomed as the successor of the banned pro-Kurdish political parties by the political Kurds abroad. Therefore, Kurdish external grassroots mobilisation for the HDP was not unexpected following the introduction of remote voting. This expectancy was also known to the party elites as they announced a target of getting 400,000 votes from Europe (HDP, 2015, January 23). Under these circumstances, it was not surprising for Kurds who already partake in ethnic organisations to become active partisans from their countries of residence for the pro-Kurdish political party, the HDP.

Unlike other Turkish political parties,[269] the HDP did not have an official headquarters to coordinate out-of-country electioneering. The HDP has two official out-of-country offices in Brussels and Strasbourg, and each of these branches has one paid officer who works as an HDP representative for the European Parliament and the Council of Europe headquarters. The interviews with the people in charge in these offices revealed that neither of them had knowledge of the exact number of the HDP election coordination offices that opened in Europe in general or

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[269] See Yener-Roderburg (2020, forthcoming).

Germany and France in particular by the NAV-DEM and CDK-F affiliated local Kurdish cultural centres. Nor were they assigned for an external voting–related task by the Ankara headquarters of the Party throughout the electoral periods, as the statements that were made as early as January 2015 by the former HDP Europe representative Eyyüp Doru assured that the election coordination and campaigning strategies would be left to the local groups who would want to partake in the electoral campaign.[270] Nevertheless, both officers underlined that both offices got up to 100 calls a day, especially from the foreign press once the HDP made it to the parliament, whereas before the elections, they received at most 10 calls a week.[271]

The HDP's external campaigning strategies were very much parallel to the other Turkish political parties. These strategies originate not only from traditional channels but also from nontraditional ways of campaigning, such as canvassing, directing public rallies, or arranging shuttle buses to transfer individuals to voting stations. Nevertheless, these were, as stated, not through the party satellites (AKP, MHP, CHP),[272] but rather by organisations like the NAV-DEM and CDK-F as HDP's alliances. These unique ways surfaced when looking at their organisational approaches in generating partisanship and voter mobilisation, because HDP's mobilisation was organised and regulated within the diaspora by local and small-scale associations that do not identify themselves with the HDP solely, but with their advocacy for the ethno-nationalist Kurdish struggle through the Kurdish cultural centres. Therefore, as soon as external voting was enabled for non-resident citizens, the Kurdish associations, mainly the cultural centres affiliated with the NAV-DEM and CDK-F, took the lead during the June and November 2015 Turkish legislative and the 2018 general electoral periods by declaring themselves as the local election coordination centres of the HDP. The organisation coordinated

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[270] It is important to note that especially for the 2018 election campaign, the HDP Ankara Headquarters had some attempts to control or centralize the election coordination in Germany and France, which were not successful. One important example on this point came from Hamburg Kurdish Cultural Centre. The HDP-Ankara Initially appointed HDP party members to the Hamburg election coordination of the HDP. A week after the appointment, the local Kurdish cultural centre that took the responsibility of the Hamburg election coordination centre of the HDP made a public statement through its social media account (e.g., Facebook) and stated that the Hamburg election coordination centre did not recognize the HDP-Ankara members, as they were not only non-local but also appointed. Upon this statement, the HDP-Ankara withdrew the appointed HDP members, and the Hamburg election coordination center of the HDP deleted the mentioned public statement from their social media account (HDP, 2015, January 23).

[271] Interviewee no. 37 and interviewee no. 58.

[272] See Yener-Roderburg (2020, forthcoming).

an information campaign, publicising in at least 68 cities in Germany the contact details of more than 70 NAV-DEM affiliated local associations, and in France in at least 12 cities with the help of over 24 CDK-F related local associations as well as other diaspora organisations,[273] so that voters could locate the nearest information point to have their election-related questions answered (Medya Haber, 2018, June 5; NAV-DEM, 2018). Another campaigning strategy of the major political parties and the unofficial HDP election coordination centres provided service in reaching the polling stations. The shuttle bus services to transport voters from their homes or designated spots to the polling stations considered the geographical proximity of the polling stations to the voters' residences.[274]

Parties in the parliament in Turkey, like many other nations, have state-given funds for their domestic campaigning.[275] Since the HDP was not in the parliament before the June 2015 election as a party, the HDP had no state support for the June 2015 electoral period. Therefore, the support it received for domestic and international campaigning consisted of donations, particularly from external supporters. Two NAV-DEM member interviewees[276] made a similar emphasis on their capacity as local cultural centres in collecting donations for the campaigning expenditures, including but not limited to the organising rallies upon visits by the HDP party elites,[277] setting election stands in the central European cities, the election decorations at the local

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[273] These organisations included but were not limited to the Cultural Association of Migrant Workers from Turkey (French: *l'Association culturelle des travailleurs immigrés de Turquie*, ACTIT), European Confederation of Democratic Rights (Turkish: *Avrupa Demokratik Haklar Konfederasyonu*, ADHK), Confederation of Workers from Turkey in Europe (Turkish: *Avrupa Türkiyeli İşçiler Konfederasyonu*, ATIK), CDK-F, DİDF, FEDA, Socialist Party of Refoundation (Turkish: *Sosyalist Yeniden Kuruluş Partisi*, SYKP), HDK-F, Odak Education and Solidarity Movement (Turkish: *ODAK Eğitim ve Dayanışma Hareketi*), TJK-F, Union of the Socialist Women (Turkish: *Sosyalist Kadınlar Birliği*, SKB), and Sinemilli Association (Turkish: *Sinemilli Derneği*) (Fırat News, 2018, June 2).

[274] The extraterritorial polling stations are not evenly distributed geographically. Therefore, a significant share of the expatriate electorate had no choice but to travel long distances to cast their votes. Party supporters found a solution by providing shuttle buses to transfer voters to designated polling stations. Please see Chapter I, section 3.2.2. subtitled *Problems emerged in relation to implementation* for the analysis of this topic.

[275] An administrative provision enacted in 2008 prohibits election campaigning outside Turkey. The OSCE noted that the rule was violated by most major political parties in both the June and November 2015 elections. In February 2017, a ruling expanded and confirmed the rule, stating that propaganda abroad or at border crossings was not permitted. However, since no criminal liability is attached to the provision, it is left as a "moral obligation".

[276] Interviewee no. 19 and Interviewee no. 23.

[277] Some of the rallies were: May 2, 2015 – then co-leader Selahattin Demirtaş in Paris, then co-leader Figen Yüksekdağ in Strasbourg; September 2015 – then co-leader Selahattin Demirtaş in Berlin, Hamburg, and

cultural centres that were made use of as election centres, and filling up the balloting committee when the need arose.[278]

From the June 2015 election to the November 2015 snap election and 2018 general elections, however, there was a change regarding the HDP funding, since the party could also benefit from the state-given funds as a party in the parliament. As a result, the HDP Ankara headquarters, especially for the 2018 elections, demanded to be involved more systematically in the mobilisations abroad. Some of the interviewees, on this point, stated that their local association was offered financial support by the Ankara HDP for the 2018 elections. However, apart from Interviewee no. 23, the cultural centres where my informants are active did not accept this support. On this matter, he admittedly underlined that for their election coordination centre's visual representation, they have asked for certain materials from Ankara which would cost less there, adding, "But please note that we sent so much more money than we asked for, we only thought a bit economical. There is no '*our* money' or '*their* money' in the end. We are all after the same cause" (Interviewee no. 23).

The HDK has also established its branches in Germany and France for the widespread support it gathered from the diasporas in these countries. The German chapter of HDK, known as HDK-Germany, was founded in 2016 with local components,[279] as the French chapter of HDK, known

Leverkusen; June 2018 – HDP's exiled former Cizre mayor Leyla Imret, AABK honorary leader, whose HDP Istanbul parliamentary candidacy was cancelled by the Supreme Electoral Court in Berlin (Özgür Politika, 2018).

[278] As a legal requirement, the number of the balloting committee members shall not exceed five and shall not be less than four (two government employees and a representative from each of the two parties). In the case of the absence of one or more balloting committee members, the right to be a representative is given to the parties that have their representatives available at the polling station (from the most voted to the least). The HDP at the polling stations in each country, Germany and France, had their representatives available. For more on the election implementation at the polling stations abroad, see Chapter I section 3.2.2 *Analysis of the elections and the implementation differences between the elections* and 3.2.2.2 *June and November 2015 legislative elections*.

[279] Some of the components could be listed as NAV-DEM, SYKP, German Federation of Migrant Workers (Turkish: *Almanya Göçmen İşçiler Federasyonu*, AGİF), SKB, Federation of Workers' Associations in Federal Germany (Turkish: *Federal Almanya İşçi Dernekleri Federasyonu*, FİDEF), Green Left Party (Turkish: *Yeşiller ve Sol Gelecek Partisi*), FEDA, Maras Initiative (Turkish: *Maraş Girişimi*), Kocgiri Initiative (Turkish: *Koçgiri İnisiyatifi*), Karakocan Initiative (Turkish: *Karakoçan İnisiyatifi*), Building Dersim Society (Turkish: *Dersim İnşa Cemiyeti*), Assyrian – Syriac Community (Turkish: *Asuri – Süryani Topluluğu),* Armenian Community (Turkish: *Ermeni Topluluğu*), Karacik Initiative (Turkish: *Karacikliler İnisiyatifi*), Tikili Initiative (Turkish: *Tikililer İnisiyatifi*), Revolutionist Laz Platform (Turkish: *Devrimci Laz Platformu*), Federation of Yazidis (Turkish: *Ezidiler Federasyonu*), Kurdistan Islamic Party (Kurdish: *Partiya İslamiya Kurdistan*, PÎK, Turkish: *Kürdistan İslam Partisi*), Kurdistan Communist Party (Kurdish: *Partiya Komunistê Kurdistan*, Turkish: *Kürdistan Komünist Partisi*), European Assembly of Exiles (Turkish*: Avrupa Sürgünler Meclisi*), European Kareli Association (Turkish: *Avrupa Kareliler Derneği*, AVKAR), Dersim 38 – Association

as HDK-France (Merhaba, 2016, November), was established in 2018 as the two most prominent branches of HDK-Europe founded in 2016 in Frankfurt (HDK Avrupa, 2021). However, as much as the existence of the HDK's in-country cases is essential, which stemmed from the increased number of HDP exiles, there has not been any significant input of either organisation during the electoral period, because the components of these organisations were already part of the alliance groups established in diaspora since the foundation of the HDP.

2.2.2. Religious organisations as a transnational political mobilisation determinant: the case of Alevis through the AABF and FUAF

The second exemplary diaspora organisations that had an open pro-HDP political stance throughout the 2015 and 2018 Turkish electoral periods in Germany and France were the AABF in Germany and the FUAF in France. Institutionally these two organisations, right after NAV-DEM in Germany and CDK-F in France, are considered the second largest pro-HDP umbrella organisations. However, these organisations' circumstantial commitments are categorised as situational organisations,[280] unlike the previously mentioned ethno-nationalist NAV-DEM and CDK-F, regarding party loyalty. Therefore, this part of the study will examine the Alevis, their diaspora appearances in the country cases and Europe, and lastly, the mentioned organisations' HDP-favouring political standpoint.

As a known and widespread belief community, Alevis have a centuries-long history as a distinct religious identity and cultural attributions. However, this long presence in the same territory did not advance their legal status, and today they still represent the largest unrecognised religious minority group within Turkey. Although the institutionalised Alevis make up the smallest proportion of Alevis in general, they appear as the most divided ones. From the smallest-scale groups such as kin community Alevi centres to the larger ones with chapters in different locations, Alevi associations vary. They differ in size, and the way they define Alevism or the

Against Genocide (Turkish: *Dersim 38 – Soykırım Karşıtı Derneği*), Association of Genocide Opposers (German: *Verein der Völkermordgegner*, Turkish: *Soykırım Karşıtları Derneği*), Union of Revolutionist Alevis (Turkish: *Devrimci Aleviler Birliği*), New Awakening (Armeanian: *Նոր Զարթոնք, Nor Zartonk*, Turkish: *Yeni Uyanış*), and Platform of Central Anatolia Kurds (Kurdish: *Platforma Kurdên Anatoliya Navîn*, PKAN) (HDK Deutschland, 2016; Merhaba, 2016, November).

[280] Recalling Duverger's "supporter" as a degree of participation (1976, pp. 90, 102). See Introduction section 5.5. for more detail.

Diyanet divides them sharply from one another. Although the Alevi organisations that are built in Turkey are hard to name or count, they are mainly divided into two groups by how they define Alevism or the Diyanet. The first one sees Alevism as the subordination of Islam, and/or Turkified Islam. The Alevis who share this perspective mostly gathered under the Cem Foundation, founded in 1995. The Cem Foundation's critics, particularly Alevis, accuse this group of being the pioneer Alevi supporter of the Turkish government and blame them for not criticising the government sufficiently. Not surprisingly, the Cem Foundation is, amongst the few other Alevi associations that have a similar pattern in their functioning, the only Alevi representation that the government authorities give credit to (Okan, 2004). Nevertheless, this credit does not necessarily mean that the Cem Foundation supporters' demands are acknowledged. The Cem Foundation's position, for example, against the Diyanet's exclusive representation of Sunni Islam is known to the public (Arslan, 2016), which is also not being attended by the authorities as the Cem Foundation supporters would wish.

Other Alevi groups that are also institutionalised are primarily gathered under the Alevi Bektashi Foundation and Pir Sultan Abdal Cultural Associations. The Alevis institutionalised by these two associations are either sceptical of the relationship between Alevism and Islam or reject such a relationship. These associations mostly relate Alevism to the socialist resistance movements (Aküzüm, 1999; Van Bruinessen, 2000b), which draws the major line between them and the Cem Foundation. Concerning the position of these categories of Alevis towards the Diyanet, it also differs from the Cem Foundation's supporters, since these two associations reject the very existence of the Diyanet and its involvement in the religious sphere as a government apparatus. They defend the laic state. On the definition of Alevism, more or less, and position regarding the Diyanet, this group is more in line with the diaspora Alevi organisations and cooperation (Arslan, 2016; Yener-Roderburg, 2020).[281] With the size of the Alevi population in combination with the political recognition that the community has gained in their host countries, the Alevi doctrine enjoyed its acknowledgement of freedom. Alevism is recognised as an independent religion from Islam, and has also become more prominent in Europe (Arslan, 2016). Countries like Germany and Austria, where Alevi religious studies are enabled for Alevi students as early as primary school, have become the lands where Alevi literature has grown over the last decades.

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[281] Interviewee no. 49.

As the largest legally unrecognised religious minority group within Turkey and amongst the Turkish diasporas, there is still no data regarding the size of the Alevi population. Therefore, the information that we have on the Alevis originating from Anatolia relies on predictions. The Alevis are estimated to number between 10 and 20 million in Turkey and the diaspora (Kehl-Bodrogi, 1988; Köse, 2012; Schuler, 2002; Tambar, 2012; Vorhoff, 1995).[282] According to Zeidan (1999), around a quarter of these Alevis are ethnic Kurds. That means the ethnic Turkish Alevis constitute the majority of Alevis living in Turkey and the ones living in the diaspora (Aksoy, 2018).

The biggest ignorance of the Alevis in the Republic of Turkey started in the first days of the Republic under the Kemalist rule, the founders of modern Turkey. By not recognising any difference afforded by religion or regional and ethnic customs in order to create a Turkish nationalist identity, the Kemalist regime failed to end state-sponsored religious division and repressive policies that homogenised the Turkish identity. Ultimately, to these ends, the Kemalist regime capitulated to the need to prop up a Sunni religious institution to replace the Ottoman caliphate – which the regime accomplished through the Diyanet, the Presidency of Religious Affairs, which to this day still oversees control of religion in Turkey (Çitak, 2010).

The Alevis were seen as both given to the modernising politics and the new national character the Kemalists wished to introduce. The Alevis had their own distinct and authentic folklore, which stood in contrast and at times even in opposition to the traditions of the Ottoman past. The Kemalists reasoned that this Alevi folklore would help build a new post-Ottoman sense of Turkishness in Anatolia, especially because Sunni-Islamic elements had dominated the majority population through the centuries-long Ottoman rule. The Kemalist regime sought to displace a perceived Ottoman adherence to Sunni social norms by delegitimising its historical hold on the Turkish geography of Anatolia. The Alevis' hope in this Kemalist utilisation of their folk-culture belonged to the appealing chance that a more inclusive history of the diverse religious life found

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[282] The Alevi population is estimated to be between 500,000 and 700,000 in Germany as the largest in the diaspora, and in France it is around 200,000 as the third largest after the United Kingdom (Eser, 2017; Kılıçkaya, 2012, July 30). Despite their sizeable number, Alevis' visibility as well as their recognition as 'Alevis' in these countries were possible only three decades after their arrival, thanks to the establishment of the first official Alevi organisations. In Germany in the 1970s, the first Alevi organisation was founded; however, it was officially known as the Workers Union of Turkey, and only the members knew that it was in fact an Alevi organisation (Massicard, 2010, p. 565).

in Turkey, especially with Islamic sects that were marginalised by the Sunni emphasis of the Ottoman Empire, would take hold in the new Republic, allowing for a more tolerant secular political culture. Yet the centuries-long suppression of Turkey's geographic hegemon powers hindered Alevis from developing a mutual group identity despite their large population and collective memory.

Alevis are significantly affected by re-victimisation due to their collective memory of traumatic incidents[283] that have impacted them over the centuries (Massicard, 2007). Accordingly, the history of the Alevis is a distinctive case in terms of revalidating its history as a community not only through long-running issues[284] throughout the Republic of Turkey's history but also through the daily dose of victimhood brought about by the history of an unrecognised identity compounded with newly created areas of tension by the Turkish governments (Yener-Roderburg, 2014). Despite the vocalised opposition, naming the third bridge over Istanbul's Bosphorus strait after Yavuz Sultan Selim,[285] or the controversy clouds over the recent debate on an Alevi high school that would open its doors to 600 Alevi students (Euro News, 2019, August 9), whether it is a sincere attempt to finally acknowledge the Alevi identity or to control and assimilate the religious Alevi communities, could be seen as one of the most recent indicators of such events. Thus, it is not hard to depict that Alevism in contemporary Turkey is still far from gaining legal and formal recognition of the state that acknowledges their Alevi citizens' sensitivities to start with.

The non-acknowledgement of the Alevi population as a distinct and autonomous identity, but seeing them as the essence of Turkishness, made the Alevi groups invisible in the society. Especially considering the not-clustered, highly spread out, and locally minority Alevi

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[283] Sixteenth-century Alevi massacre by Yavuz Sultan Selim, 1937–1938 Dersim Massacre, 1978 Maraş Massacre, 1993 Sivas (Madımak) Massacre, and 1995 Gazi Incident (Massicard, 2007; Ocak, 1998; Okan, 2004; Özkul, 2015; Refik, 1932; Sökefeld, 2008).

[284] Not granting the similar status to the Alevi shrines as mosques, compulsory Sunni Islam–dominated religion classes, and the existence of Diyanet (Tol, 2016).

[285] Yavuz Sultan Selim, a prominent figure as an Ottoman Sultan, is believed to have killed thousands of Alevis in Anatolia under his rule, specifically during the Battle of Chaldiran in 1514 against the Shah Ismail–led Safavid Dynasty (Ocak, 1998; Refik, 1932; Sökefeld, 2008).

population, the invisibility of this group was not unexpected. Nevertheless, it could only last until the Alevi rural migration within and outside of Turkey.

Therefore, a closer look at Turkey between 1970 and 1990 is vital to understand the evolution of the Alevi identity from invisible to visible in the public sphere. The migration movements that launched during the 1960s brought the identity movements of the 1970s along. The Alevis joined the ongoing process of identity transformation during the 1980s,[286] the period now known as the Alevi Revival (Köse, 2012; White & Jongerden, 2003). The major left-wing identity movement of Alevis that was blooming around this time was interrupted by the Turkish regime's direct sectarian violence due to the political polarisation between left and right political wings (Hiç, 2009; Massicard, 2007; Tambar, 2012). This situation caused the Alevis to abandon the centricity of their previously religiously and/or ethnically defined identity and to reflect itself in the form of an increasing socialist ideology, which has become the connecting core of the political standpoint among the Alevis in Turkey to this day (Çamuroğlu, 1998; Köse, 2012; Massicard, 2007; Schwalgin & Sökefeld, 2000).

Right after its second election victory in 2007, the AKP introduced a series of democratising programmes that targeted Turkey's unacknowledged religious/ethnic minority groups in order to consolidate mainly the swing voters of these groups (Akdağ, 2014). The Alevis were also part of this initiative of the AKP in which the "Kurdish opening" was more prominent. The programme that captured Alevis was called "Alevi Opening" (Lord, 2017). With this opening, the AKP claimed to grant certain rights that Alevis had longed for since the Kemalist regime took their identities hostage during the establishment of the Republic of Turkey.

Establishing a particular unit on Alevis linked to the Prime Ministry, founding an Alevi institute, giving *cemevis*[287] status and subsidising their water and electricity bills, equating Alevi *dedes*[288] position to imams regarding their official status, changing the compulsory level of the religious classes to optional at schools, and including Alevism in the religion classes' curriculums were

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[286] "The Alevi identity movement was markedly different when referenced to other similar movements at the time, both in terms of religious and ethnic actors, such as Islamist and Kurdish movements" (Yener-Roderburg, 2014, p. 14).

[287] *Cemevi* is the Alevi "ritual place for assembly" (Dressler, 2015, p. 20).

[288] *Dedes* "are the religious specialists of Alevism" (Sökefeld, 2002, p. 163).

the major points highlighted under the "Alevi Opening" Programme of the AKP (Akdemir, 2014). This programme was welcomed by the state-supporting Alevi associations such as the Cem Foundation. Nevertheless, other institutionalised Alevis, particularly those under the Alevi Bektashi Foundation and Pir Sultan Abdal Cultural Association, with the support of the prominent diaspora Alevi organisations, accused the AKP's "Alevi Opening" of not being authentic and sincere enough in their declaration (Özkul, 2015).[289]

The years following the emergence of the "Alevi Opening" proved that the oppositional group were correct in their claims. The AKP failed to put all the points in its agenda into action, and the violent attacks and insults against Alevis increased throughout this period (Zırh, 2013). The topic of including Alevism in the school curriculum went beyond public discussion, and a passage on Alevism was actually added to the history and religious school books. Yet Alevism in these books is not mentioned as a sect of Islam, which is the most common approach towards Alevism by the non-Alevi population of Turkey. Instead, the curriculum presents Alevism as a folkloric and cultural pattern within the Sunni sect of Islam in Turkey (Oda Tv, 2017, January 19).

Despite the overall frustration that the "Alevi Opening" brought out, there are three strongly correlated outcomes that Alevis drew from this process, which could be called the "second Alevi revival". (1) The AKP's political stance towards Alevis is solidified via the trivialised recognition of Alevis through the status given to them in the school books. (2) Even though Alevi groups were aware of the weakness of the Kemalist ideology from its early periods, the majority of the Alevis nevertheless remained faithful defenders/supporters of Kemalism, namely, of the CHP. However, the CHP's passive attitude before, during, and after the "Alevi Opening" created a wave of mistrust among the Alevis, particularly those who have emerged as significant political actors in urban and public places in recent decades in Turkey and the diaspora. (3) As a result, some of the Alevi communities began to rediscover their suppressed identity (Yener-

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[289] The declaration is as follows: "It is not the right of anyone or any group to intervene in Alevi teaching and organisations that have emerged as a result of a long historical process and organic development, to attempt to deform and to change these through forms of social engineering. As all faith systems, Alevism is a space that only and only members of this faith and culture can shape as a collective. Primarily the state, and also the non-Alevi individuals and organisations have to respect this personal space of faith, and have to stay out of it. We make these statements in the strongest terms" (Özkul, 2015, p. 11).

Roderburg, 2014), and they searched for alternative political reference actors, finding their answer after 2012 in the newly established pro-Kurdish political party, the HDP.

Until the foundation of the HDP, the self-described Alevi community, as aforementioned, consisted mainly of the CHP sympathisers and supporters of some other small-scale leftist factions. However, the early 2010s, the second Alevi revival showed that Alevis could not gain their recognition via the CHP's Kemalist strategies that explicitly avoided direct reference to the Alevis. However, the HDP emerged as a pro-Alevi rights party and managed to unify the sympathy of a remarkable amount of the self-described Alevis. These changes in the homeland political scene were followed closely by the Alevi migrants in the diaspora.[290] In short, the growing number of diaspora Alevis and their public visibility generated the necessary circumstances for Alevism to flourish in and outside of Turkey.

2.2.2.1. *Alevis in Europe*

In the wake of the bilateral labour agreements as part of the guest worker programme, Alevi emigrants along with the Sunnis and seculars[291] began to flow steadily from Turkey into Germany and France respectively from 1961 and 1964 on. Until the 1980s, the constellations did not show a visible faction among the Turkey-originating groups. Then-temporary workers established workers' associations and joined the trade unions (Dudley & Lloyd, 2006; Massicard, 2010; Østergaard-Nielsen, 2016).

The changes in the homeland political scene were followed closely by Alevi migrants in Germany and other West European countries (Özkul, 2019; Sökefeld, 2004). This politically predisposed shift in Alevi identity gave new rise to the demand for migration among the Alevis towards Western nations, steadily increasing the size of the community in host countries (Massicard, 2010; Özkul, 2019).

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[290] This politically predisposed shift in Alevi identity led to a new rise in the demand for migration among the Alevis towards the western nations that steadily increased the size of the community in the destination countries (Massicard, 2010).

[291] According to Altan Gökalp (1980) Turkey originating people were divided into three belief groups, (1) Sunnis, (2) Alevis, and (3) Kemalists. The Kemalists in his study can be seen as the subgroup of the seculars.

As stated above, due to the absence of reliable data on the ethnic and religious backgrounds of the citizens in the countries where Alevis live, there are only estimates about the size of this religious community. The estimates suggest that the number of Alevis originating from Anatolia, in total, ranges between 10–20 million in Turkey and the diaspora (Köse, 2012; Tambar, 2012; Vorhoff, 1995). According to Zeidan (1999), around a quarter of these Alevis are ethnic Kurds – meaning, the ethnic Turkish Alevis constitute the majority of Alevis living in Turkey and of those living in the diaspora (Aksoy, 2018).

The Alevi population is estimated to be between 500,000 and 700,000 in Germany and the largest in the diaspora; in France, the Alevi population is around 200,000 and the third-largest in the diaspora, after the United Kingdom, which is home to roughly 250,000 Alevis (Eser, 2017; Kılıçkaya, 2012, July 30). Despite their sizeable number, Alevis' visibility and their recognition as 'Alevis' in these countries were possible only three decades after their arrival, following the establishment of the first official Alevi organisations.

Before I unfold the chronological evolution of the Alevi organisations in Germany and France, I first would like to underline that I have no intention of dismissing the importance of the unmentioned Alevi factions that have been established in the above-mentioned countries. For this work, the most prominent Alevi diaspora umbrella organisations will be briefly introduced from each country: the Alevi Federation Germany (German: *Alevitische Gemeinde Deutschland*, AABF) and the Federation of Alevi Unions in France (French: *Fédération Union des Alévis en France*, FUAF). The absence of the Alevis in the national census in these case countries makes it harder to make general assumptions about the Alevis. Therefore, emphasis will be placed on these two organisations that claim to have the largest Alevi reach among the Alevi-affiliated organisations in the countries in which they function.

In addition to their geographical closeness and similar experiences of migration intake patterns from Turkey, the Alevi organisations by and large evolved hand in hand in Germany and France. As is shown above, the Alevi movement in these countries has always been very much tied to the developments of the Alevi struggle in Turkey. Therefore, it is not possible to think of agenda-setting in these organisations independent of the political turmoil that Turkey was and is undergoing.

In Germany, the first Alevi organisation was founded in the 1970s. Although it was officially known as the Workers Union of Turkey and only the members knew that it was an Alevi organisation (Massicard, 2010), it was still possible to find some organisations as early as 1979 that were formed exclusively by Alevis in Berlin and Hamburg. These organisations of adopted Kemalist ideology consisted of supporters of the CHP and the Unity Party (Turkish: *Birlik Partisi,* BP) (Sökefeld, 2004). Among the Turkish immigrants in Germany, as stated earlier, the CHP was supported by an expatriate wing called Federation of People's Revolutionary Union (Turkish: *Sosyaldemokrat Halk Dernekleri Federasyonu*, HDF), which demanded their organising committee file a protest with then-prime minister Bülent Ecevit and called for the protection of Alevis in Turkey as a reaction to the Maraş Massacre of 1978. Following the rejection of this demand, Alevis consisting primarily of guest workers left the party and founded the Union of Patriots in 1979; in the long run, they mostly served the community to fulfil their cultural needs and desires (Schwalgin & Sökefeld, 2000; Sökefeld, 2004). BP, on the other hand, is a former Turkish Alevi political party. It was founded in 1966 and was dissolved in 1981 after the military coup of 1980; most of its supporters subsequently sided with the CHP (Schwalgin & Sökefeld, 2000).

As the first organisation with an explicit 'Alevi' title, the Hamburg Alevi Cultural Centre emerged in May 1990 (Özyürek, 2009). This local Alevi association was followed by the foundation of a number of local Alevi organisations in Germany and other West European countries, especially following the Sivas massacre of Turkey in 1993 (Eser, 2017; Schwalgin & Sökefeld, 2000; Sökefeld, 2004).[292] From this point on, the Alevis in Germany vocalised the need for a more unified Alevi organisation to join the Alevi struggle in Turkey and generate a lobby against Turkish state violence and suppression of Alevis. As a result, the AABF was established in 1993[293] in Cologne, and it was appointed to be the umbrella organisation of the member organisations, 160 associations to date, throughout Germany. AABF claims to represent 700,000 Alevis living in Germany, making the organisation the trend-setter for the third-largest

[292] On July 2, 1993, the hotel where the participants in an Alevi cultural festival stayed was set fire by the Islamists in the city of Sivas. The available footage along with the witnesses prove that the local authorities at that time, under the rule of the Islamist Welfare Party, made no effort either to stop the violence or to extinguish the fire. The events resulted in the killing of 35 people, mostly Alevi intellectuals, and two people from the mob also died.

[293] The AABF accepts their formation date as 1989, but this is not assured by the official documents; therefore, this work accepts 1993 as the emerging year of the AABF as is indicated officially.

belief group – after Christians and Sunni Muslims – in Germany (AABF, 2021; AGD, 2019). In 2002, AABF was acknowledged as a religious community by the Federal Republic of Germany and an appointed member of the German Islam Conference as the authority for the Alevis in Germany (AABK, 2021). As of December 10, 2020, after three decades of struggle for recognition, AABF received the status of cooperation under public law for the first time nationwide by the state of North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW) in Germany.[294] With this law, Alevis, through AABF, have gained an equal footing with the two large Christian churches (Catholic and Protestant) in NRW. Furthermore, the status of a corporation under public law brings significant rights, such as the right to gather taxes from members; discounts on taxes, levies, and fees; and the right to have a member in the committees (ANF News, 2020, December 13). Yet an official number of active Alevi members at the local Alevi associations under the AABF in Germany has to be obtained.

Unlike Germany, it took even longer for Alevis in France to unite under an official Alevi association. Despite the earlier active associations since the 1980s, the FUAF, the umbrella organisation for the Alevi associations of France, was formed in Bar Le Duc in 1997 with five Alevi local cultural centres (Koşulu, 2013). [295] The most updated numbers show that along with the Paris headquarters, 41 Alevi local cultural centres are currently under FUAF, reaching nearly 20,000 active members attached to these local associations spread across France (AABK, 2015; Fransa24, 2016, January 11). Although the FUAF does not claim to represent any specific number of Alevis in France, French authorities see this umbrella organisation as the voice of the Alevi cultural community in France, unlike Germany, which accepts the Confederation European Alevi Unions (Turkish: *Avrupa Alevi Birlikleri Konfederasyonu*, AABK) as a religious authority on Alevism (ANF News, 2020, December 13; Koşulu, 2013). However, as members pointed out, the latter situation in Germany does not change how the branches of FUAF function.

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[294] Since 2012 AABF have signed an Equality of Rights Agreement first with Hamburg, then with Lower Saxony, Bremen, Rheinland-Pfalz and lastly with the state of Schleswig-Holstein (Özkul, 2019; Yol Haber, 2021, November 25). These agreements ensure the recognition of the Alevisim as a distinct belief and the AABF is the official representatives in these states. This recognition gives the Alevi residents "the right to celebrate religious holidays, to educate clerics, to open childcare centres and schools, to found Chairs in Alevism studies in universities, to participate in media consultation committees, and to have the same public recognition as Christians and Jews" (Özkul, 2019, p. 16).

[295] One of the early Alevi associations that was established in France before FUAF was the one founded in Paris in 1992 with 600 members (Arkilic, 2022).

These organisations' major objectives initially were to raise awareness of the Alevis' religious and cultural struggles in their homeland; however, they also played an important role in creating the Alevi doctrine in their more welcoming destination countries. These aims are very much connected to what Schwalgin and Sökefeld (2000, pp. 19–20) limited to six activity types in Germany, which do not differ in principle to a great extent in France despite the different status given to the religious organisations there: (1) Alevi Cultural Week (*cem* ceremony,[296] concerts), (2) cultural events (mostly concerts), (3) panel discussions (mostly specific topics on Alevism), (4) commemorations of massacres, (5) courses in music and dance, and (6) general meetings to fulfil Germany's rules of organisation.

2.2.2.2. Cross-border alliances

Over the last two decades, the Alevi movement has unified its voice in Europe under the roof of the Confederation European Alevi Unions (Turkish: *Avrupa Alevi Birlikleri Konfederasyonu*, AABK). The AABK was founded in 1998, with the initiations of AABF and the local Alevi organisations from Germany's neighbouring countries. It aims to "preserve and contribute to the development of the cultural identity and the religious or philosophical values of Alevis living in Europe" (Massicard, 2010, p. 570). Even though the AABK is the umbrella association of Alevi federations in most European countries, containing more than 250 associations across Europe, AABF and then FUAF are the distinctive pioneers that set the agenda for the AABK (Massicard, 2010). In light of the brief information given about the AABF and the FUAF, it would not be wrong to say that their local centres in Germany and France came into prominence due to their capacity to generate the largest diasporic religious field for the Alevis with membership, as well as their ability to attract broader Alevi populations beyond their geographical reach with the help of their influence on the AABK.

With the political turmoil in Turkey, political refugees started appearing in the public space of the host countries. The exile wing of Turkey's Alevi organisation Revolutionary Youth emerged under the Revolutionary Path. The Revolutionary Path focused mainly on the revolutionary struggle in Turkey and, unlike the Union of Patriots, used cultural events to fundraise for political change in Turkey (Özyürek, 2009; Sökefeld, 2004).

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[296] Alevi religious ceremonies are called *cem*.

Moreover, from the 1990s on, many Kurds sought refugee status and political asylum in Europe – particularly in Germany and France – due to the armed conflict throughout the 1980s between the Kurdish guerilla organisation PKK and the Turkish government. Thus, the population of the Kurdish political community in Germany and France increased significantly (Østergaard-Nielsen, 2016).[297] In addition, many Alevis were more or less directly affected by the Kurdish struggle because some of them were also Kurds.[298]

Both AABF and FUAF have been headed by former leftist activists of Turkey who have an opposing stance against the Turkish state and who previously formed the above-mentioned organisations (Arkilic, 2016; Koşulu, 2013; Massicard, 2010). They were founded in the wake of the political events in Turkey as a reaction to these events (Yalçın-Heckmann, 1998). The Maraş massacre, as mentioned above, and especially the Sivas massacre have played key roles in boosting the number of local Alevi centres in host countries (Eser, 2017). However, as studies also point out, Alevi cultural centres were characterised by leftist political factionalism.

However, besides the 1999 Turkish general election, the Peace Party, an Alevi Turkish political party, had two AABF members in their party lists as MP candidates (Schwalgin & Sökefeld, 2000). Due to the national 10-percent threshold, this party failed to gain any seats in the Turkish parliament and was dissolved shortly after that. The Alevi institutions under AABK mainly had their voices heard in the Turkish political arena regarding their support for Turkey's accession to the European Union, as well as their launching a petition for the abolition of compulsory Sunni religious education and the recognition of Alevi places of worship in Turkey (Massicard, 2010).

2.2.2.3. Alevi organisations: situational support for the HDP

Institutionalisation of the diaspora Alevis, like in the case of the Kurdish diaspora, largely consists of bottom-up structured foundations, which again enables us to see the intense engagement of the diaspora Alevis in the *known community sphere*.[299] Still, the Alevi diaspora in the country cases of Germany and France offers an exemplary associational life of an

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[297] For the Kurdish immigrants' emergence as political entities in Germany, see Østergaard-Nielsen (2016).

[298] As the numbers of Kurds and Alevis are not known to the official authorities, the number of Kurdish Alevis is hard to estimate.

[299] Here I recall Nicholas Van Hear and Robin Cohen's (2017) article.

immigrant community, which could also be helpful to understand their involvement in home-party mobilisation from their country of residence.

Operating independently of political party authorities while undertaking political campaigning for that political party is an unusual hallmark of remote partisanship, according to understandings of traditional political parties. In this respect, France and Germany, as the countries with the two largest Turkey-originating diasporas in the world, serve as significant examples for the ways in which the local religious diaspora members under AABF and FUAF work for a homeland political party – the pro-Kurdish HDP – independent of that political party and without being an official component of the local HDKs or of NAV-DEM or CDK-F. These institutions can thus be considered "situational" HDP supporters.

Until the HDP, despite being self-motivated in generating their political agenda prior to external enfranchisement, the members of AABF often leaned towards the CHP. Unlike previously held Turkish elections, the 2015 elections unified the Alevis' fragmented individual sympathies for Turkish political parties – mainly the HDP. Since non-resident citizens have been able to cast their ballots from across the border, there have been many pro-Kurdish political parties that have attempted to gain seats in the Turkish parliament (Democracy Party, People's Democracy Party, Democratic Peoples' Party, Democratic Society Party, Peace and Democracy Party). The support of the AABF and the FUAF for the HDP was made public by the AABK in the run-up to the June and November 2015 elections, in a press statement calling on their members to support the party at the ballot box (AABF, 2015). Furthermore, the only official magazine of the AABK, *Voice of the Alevis* (Turkish: *Alevilerin Sesi*),[300] called for votes for a political party, the HDP, for the first time in its publishing history since 1994 (see Image 2). Around 30 pages of that issue were dedicated to explaining why the Alevis in Europe should vote for this party, with specific emphasis on Germany and France (Alevilerin Sesi, 2015, April).

The close relationships that were particularly built during the electoral periods between NAV-DEM, CDK-F and HDK-Europe, and AABF and FUAF have also resonated through the

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[300] *Alevilerin Sesi* is a monthly magazine published in Germany and distributed through subscription to around 5,000 subscribers all over Europe. The magazine shares news on Alevi cultural centers in Europe, developments from Europe and the world, cultural and art-related columns, and written pieces in German and French (Merhaba, 2019, August). For more information on the magazine see the following link: https://alevilerinsesi.eu/en/

election-free periods in the shape of co-organising protests,[301] participating in each other's organisations with official representation,[302] using official media outlets for raising awareness,[303] and so on. One of the most visible indicators of strong connections between the mentioned Alevi organisations and the HDP and affiliated organisations and the Kurdish cause was the 30th anniversary of the AABF. On September 28, 2019, this anniversary was celebrated with around 20,000 people at the Lanxess Arena in Cologne. Among all AABK members in addition to the AABF and FUAF (such as the England Alevi Cultural Centre and Cemevi, Federation of Alevi Communities in the Netherlands, and the Alevi-Bektashi Association in Italy[304]), there were also some parliamentary members of the HDP, some HDP exiles, and also some CHP MPs (Deutsche Islam Konferenz, 2019). Furthermore, there were many NAV-DEM members present who showed their solidarity with the AABF. At the same event, I came across two Kurdish initiatives raising money to support arrested HDP members by selling Demirtaş's book *Dawn* (Turkish: *Seher*), which Demirtaş wrote in his isolated prison cell. Upon our informal conversation at the spot, they claimed that dozens of people purchased the book.

All in all, although a collective decision of Alevi organisations has turned these faith/cultural belonging-based migrant organisations into one of the key pro-HDP political actors abroad, particularly in Germany and France, the continuous unwavering support from every Alevi community member for the HDP cannot be proven, which leaves the loyalty of these organisations at the level of 'situational'. One of the indicators of these organisations' situational support can be traced at the local level, as the local Alevi cultural centres that are affiliated with the AABF and FUAF, despite the AABK's press statement, did not act like election coordination centres and did not have HDP banners at their premises, unlike in the case of the local affiliated Kurdish cultural centres of the NAV-DEM and CDK-F. Chapter III will analyse the incentives

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[301] Turkey's Massacre History Vigil. Retrieved from:
https://www.facebook.com/HDK.Avrupa.Europe/posts/1921617171489202

[302] Showing solidarity with the arrested HDP politicians in Turkey (Evrensel, 2018, May 26).

[303] Yol TV, the only official media outlet of the AABK based in Cologne (Merhaba, 2019, August), periodically broadcasts on the promotion of the HDP and unfair judgement of the HDP members in Turkey (Canlı Haber, 2014, December 13).

[304] For the Alevi presence in Italy see Ince-Beqo and Yener-Roderburg (2018, 2021).

encountered throughout the fieldwork that triggered the politicisation of the transnational religious Alevi identity in favour of the homeland HDP party.

2.2.3. Workers' unions as long-lasting non-partisan political actors: the case of DIDF

Early Turkey-originating 'guest workers' in Germany founded the first Turkey-originating diaspora organisations in this country, which mostly emerged in the shape of Turkish workers' associations. These formations aimed not only to raise the Turkish workers' awareness of their rights in this new country but also "to provide a 'home away from home'" for "the Turkish workers – at that time mostly living away from their families" (Østergaard-Nielsen, 2016, p. 46). These organisations were not connected at the national level but remained at local levels where the Turkish workers mostly settled. Additionally, these associations had no link to the Turkish government. These associations were relatively small, may not have had many paid members, and did not object to achieving transborder collective action but focused on daily problems at the local level, mostly related to living and working matters. In such an environment, the Federation of Democratic Workers' Associations (Turkish: *Demokratik İşçi Dernekleri Federasyonu*, DIDF) has emerged as the umbrella organisation of several Turkey-originating workers' associations, founded by Turkish and Kurdish workers in Bielefeld, Germany, in 1980. To this day, it consists mainly of Turkey-originating people with Turkish and Kurdish ethnic backgrounds (Amelina & Faist, 2008; DIDF 2020a; DIDF 2020b). Today DIDF has over 40 local member associations in Germany. The organisation's official webpage is updated regularly in two languages (Turkish and German) along with other DIDF-Germany social media accounts (DIDF, 2020a).

DIDF in France, on the other hand, has emerged rather recently compared to some other workers' unions founded by Turkey-originating migrants,[305] in 2003. DIDF-France, compared to its sister organisation in Germany, is not as accessible. The webpage of the organisation is not validated. However, its social media accounts, such as Twitter and Facebook, have more updated content. Hüseyin Avgan, then president of DIDF-Germany, also participated in the founding

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[305] For example, the Citizen Assembly of the People from Turkey (French: *L'Assemblée Citoyenne des Originaires de Turquie,* Turkish: *Türkiyeli Yurttaşlar Meclisi,* L'Acort) (Akgönül, 2020; Akinci & Yagmur, 2015), formerly known as the Association of the Workers from Turkey (ATT), the Cultural Association of Migrant Workers from Turkey (French: *l'Association culturelle des travailleurs immigrés de Turquie*, ACTIT), and the International Civic Actions (French: *l'Actions citoyennes interculturelles*, ASTU), formerly known as the Association of Solidarity with the Turkish Workers (French: *l'Association de solidarité avec les Travailleurs turcs*, ASSTU).

congress of DIDF-France. DIDF in France is active with at least ten member associations (Evrensel, 2003, January 30). In both countries, the youth branches of DIDF appear highly functional.[306] DIDF, in addition to its umbrella organisations in Germany and France, currently has chapters in the Netherlands, Austria, Great Britain, and Switzerland.

DIDF in the resident countries aims at promoting workers' rights, mainly representing the interests of people with a migrant background; fights racism; and encourages integration with the resident country while creating public opinion against violations of workers' rights as well as human rights taking place in Turkey (Amelina & Faist, 2008; DIDF 2020a; DIDF 2020b).

DIDF defines itself as a democratic, non-partisan, independent, non-political organisation that is neither a lobbying organisation nor a nationalist one (DIDF 2020a; DIDF 2020b). However, despite its objective of remaining non-partisan as an institution, DIDF-Germany is known for its close cooperation with Germany's workers, the Left Party (German: *die Linke*),[307] which is by foundation considered the direct descendant of the Marxist-Leninist ruling party of the former German Democratic Republic (German: *Deutsche Demokratische Republik*) (Amelina & Faist, 2008). Furthermore, between 2007 and 2018, DIDF was listed as a left-wing extremist group by Germany's Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution (German: *Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz*, BfV) (BfV, 2007).

Furthermore, DIDF shows its sympathy with the Kurdish struggle in and outside of Turkey. One such occasion was DIDF's solidarity statement with the former co-chairman of the NAV-DEM Bahattin Doğan, whose residence permit was revoked by the judicial authorities of Leipzig, Germany. DIDF, in their public statement, opposed the stance of the German government to criminalise Kurdish activists and organisations, accused Germany of adopting parallel sanctions with Turkey against Kurds, and called for a lift of the PKK ban (DIDF, 2017, March 1). The close ties between DIDF and the Kurdish struggle are also evident in the German political scene.

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[306] For Germany and France see the following links, respectively:
https://didf-jugend.de/ueberuns/
https://www.facebook.com/DIDF.Jeunes/photos/

[307] The Left Party was founded in 2007 as a result of the Party of Democratic Socialism (German: *Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus*, PDS) and Labour and Social Justice – The Electoral Alternative (German: *Arbeit und soziale Gerechtigkeit – Die Wahlalternative*, WASG).

German-Kurdish politicians Sevim Dağdelen[308] and Özlem Alev Demirel are known as two of the major Kurdish struggle advocates in German politics; before becoming parliament members from die Linke, they were DIDF's committee members in Germany.[309] Additionally, two of the Left Party Hamburg parliamentarians of Turkish Kurdistan origin, Deniz Çelik and Mehmet Yıldız, are also known members of DIDF and Kurdish movement activists.

2.2.3.1. DIDF's precarious support for the HDP

As stated above, by foundation, DIDFs aim first and foremost at the workers' welfare in the resident countries. Nevertheless, due to the membership biographies, DIDFs also show interest towards Turkey, especially when the Turkish agenda is busy with workers' or human rights violations (Ameline & Faist, 2008). Therefore, it was not a coincidence that the DIDF in Germany and France, unlike in the case of the Kurdish organisations NAV-DEM in Germany and CDK-F in France and the Alevi organisations AABF in Germany and FUAF in France, have less transnational and translocal interaction but focus more on the local or regional issues of the member groups. As they showed more "secrecy of polling-booth" (Duverger, 1976, p. 102) and did not necessarily reveal their support for the HDP, they are considered precarious organisations in respect to their loyalty for the party.

This independent formation of DIDF also resonated when it came to the Turkish elections in which the non-resident electorates could vote from their countries of residence. DIDF at the institutional level did not make an open declaration for their support for the HDP during the elections, neither in Germany nor in France. However, some of the local branches of DIDF took part as components of HDK-Germany for the June and November 2015 elections. Some local DIDFs have also shown solidarity at several marches with the protests organised by the pro-Kurdish groups and some local AABF and FUAF organisations in the country cases, denouncing the arrests of HDP politicians in Turkey and the Turkish army presence at the Kurdish villages.[310]

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[308] More information can be found on Dağdelen at the following link: https://www.sevimdagdelen.de/uber_mich/

[309] More on the Kurds lived experiences in relation to their resident country and party relations see Toivanen and Yener-Roderburg (forthcoming).

[310] Such as the DIDF presence in November 2016 in Cologne (Ruptly, 2016).

When it comes to the pro-HDP stance of the DIDF as umbrella organisations in both Germany and France, there was no open declaration that favoured HDP, particularly during the elections. However, the support of DIDF by its members in both countries was significant and vital in cities like Strasbourg, which will be further explained in Chapter III.

2.3. Concluding remarks

As we have seen, broadly, from the country cases of Germany and France, the diaspora organisations originating from Turkey have dominated the social networks of the migrant groups who make up these organisations in these countries today. We have also observed how these organisations changed or adapted their organisational structures in Turkey's political parties and their mobilisations during the Turkish elections from Germany and France. Therefore, even though the number of those organisations originating from Turkey is hard to name and count, the mainstream Turkish parties' satellite organisations and the alliance organisations of the HDP were underlined with more attention to the latter group to serve the aim of the study. To do that, this chapter explored the three most found forms – religion, political, and ethnic and cultural poles – of Turkey-originating diaspora organisations in Germany and France. The HDF (later CHP) Berlin Union for the CHP and the DIDF for the HDP exemplify the workers' unions; the DITIB or CCMTF for the AKP, IGMG for the RP, and AABF and FUAF for the HDP represent religious organisations; and the selected ethnic organisations were the Turkish Federation in Germany for the MHP and then also for the AKP, and the NAV-DEM and CDK-F for the HDP.

Considering this context, it is evident that Turkey-originating groups' vibrant pre-external-voting support already represented the whole spectrum of Turkish political parties in Germany and France as early as the 1970s. Therefore, this section not only sheds light on the developments that emerged following non-resident voter enfranchisement in 2012 within the capacities of these diaspora organisations, but also informs us about how mainstream and unconventional parties differ under such circumstances (external voting). In other words, with the introduction of external voting rights, the diasporas' organisations either are the target of the sending-country political parties (here, the AKP, MHP, and CHP) or can be grasped as a self-motivated remote alliance of a 'homeland' political party (here, the HDP). To this end, it can be concluded that the existing literature that acknowledges the diaspora communities as the stooge of the homeland

political parties, this part of the chapter has shown through HDP's alliances that they could be significant building blocks of political mobilisation abroad.

Moreover, this section has clarified that the emergence of these largely marginalised Turkey-originating diasporas' associations will also indicate that Germany has held the pioneering role as the first preferred country of the big number of Turkish migrants, which has not changed. Yet France plays a critical role for Turkey's diasporas as the largest ally of Germany. The cross-border alliances of the Turkey-originating migrant organisations also show the transnationality of the organisations that goes beyond the connection between sending country (here Turkey) and receiving country (here Germany or France), but rather grasps multiple countries, which in return has a vast effect, especially when external voting and the politicisation of these organisations are considered.

Chapter III

For the Homeland from the Diaspora: The Pro-HDP Individuals' Motivations in Germany and France. Interstices to Microcosm

The previous chapters of this study have elaborated the mainstream parties that have their extensions in the country cases of this work, Germany and France. In these chapters, it has been seen that until the election results were obtained from the first general elections that involved the Turkish nationals from their countries of residence, the depth of organising and popularity that the Peoples' Democratic Party (Turkish: *Halkların Demokratik Partisi*, HDP) had attained – which made the HDP the second party abroad, compared to its fourth-place spot according to the in-country results – was not yet clear. In other words, the election results first in June 2015, then in November 2015, and lastly in June 2018 revealed that the newly enfranchised non-resident electorates who came out to many polling stations in the diaspora were a primary factor in the pro-Kurdish HDP's success; furthermore, this included not only the ethnic minority immigrant populations but also the unionist ones, hitherto largely absent in the public scene as an active electorate or as supporters (despite being involved behind the scenes). As the countries with the two largest Turkey-originating diasporas in the world, Germany and France serve as crucial exemplars for the role of the local diaspora organisations' mobilisation, rather than the Turkish political parties' campaigns and lobbying activities, in generating the relatively high turnout rate abroad.

As highlighted earlier, this situation also supports the argument that the most independent and different ethnic and belief associations and trade unions mentioned – the Democratic Social Centre of the Kurds in Germany (Kurdish: *Navenda Civaka Demokratîk ya Kurdên li Almanyayê*, NAV-DEM), the Kurdish Democratic Council in France (French: *Conseil Démocratique kurde en France*, CDK-F), the Alevi Federation in Germany (German: *Alevitische Gemeinde Deutschland*, AABF), the Federation of Alevi Unions in France (French: *Fédération Union des Alévis en France*, FUAF) and the Federation of Democratic Workers' Associations (Turkish: *Demokratik İşçi Dernekleri Federasyonu*, DIDF) – have differed in their support for the HDP at the institutional level, which this study identifies as veritable, situational, and

precarious organisations in Chapter II. However, the analysis of the qualitative data collected from interviewees who define themselves as HDP supporters in the country cases, Germany and France, presented that at the individual level, motivational factors, which could be interests, needs, expectations, worries, and challenges (what this study calls *interstices*)[311] are higher in number, leading them to generate a *microcosm*. Therefore, to answer the question of *when* these various groups consisting of highly different individual backgrounds would coincide with supporting and mobilising for a political party, I suggest that there was a need among these groups and individuals in the political realm that was already open for a political action/participation – in this case, a newly born political party – that would activate these groups as components, yet not necessarily engaging ones, of a microcosm, which can also be understood as a multi-diaspora community coalition or alliance formation.

To comprehend the complexity of the individual level of motivational factors for the pro-HDP stance of non-resident persons, this chapter will evaluate 62 interviews[312] that are thematically analysed. Particularly considering the number of variables the interviewees provided, NVivo helped in narrowing down the data to a great extent and highlighting the surprising outcomes, such as the indifference of voting eligibility in supporter behaviour and organisations' relation to each other.[313]

The first part of the chapter will focus on the non-voter supporters in their non-electoral ways of political engagement, particularly mobilising the electorates. In the following part, the individuals' degrees of party support will be evaluated, making distinctions in respect to their veritable, situational, and precarious stances for the HDP.

1. Non-voter support among HDP partisans

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[311] Recalling the Introduction chapter, Section 2.

[312] See Introduction chapter, Methodology section and Appendixes 1, 2 and 3 for more detailed information on the interviewees.

[313] See Introduction chapter, Methodology section for detailed information on thematical coding for the analysis.

Migration flows from countries with long-lasting ethnic tensions such as Turkey should be evaluated with further studies regarding remote voting that do not disregard non-voters. As expected, the different components not only followed different fashions throughout the migration history of Turkey but also generated a unique form of mobilisation by and for homeland political parties within the diaspora, which is directly linked to the diasporic identity of these distinct groups that is active independent from their voting eligibility. Therefore, recalling the Introduction chapter, section 4.3.1 *External voting*, the extended version of Lafleur's (2013) external voting understanding is adapted in this study. The altered version of the famous definition is as follows: *External voting is the electoral process in which* active *(right to vote)* and passive voting rights *(right to get elected)* of qualified individuals *and the individuals who lack voting rights*, independently of their professional status … take part *in the electoral process* from outside the national territory in referenda or in supranational, national, subnational, or primary elections held in a country … *independent from whether* they hold citizenship but where they permanently or temporarily do not reside (Lafleur, 2013, p. 31, text in italics is my additions).

In 2012 under Justice and Development Party (Turkish: *Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi*, AKP) rule, the final necessary amendments to the Law on Basic Provisions on Elections and Electoral Roll (see Table 1) were made, and the conditions for external voting were at last in place. Even though the addition of eligible non-resident voters since 2012 has meant that external voters make up more than five percent of the Turkish electorate, not only has representing this voter bloc become an increasing target of competition among Turkish political parties, but also, important actors in Kurdish, Alevi, and left mobilisation, mainly post-1980s political refugees. Most of these political refugees, who, at this point in time, largely do not have Turkish citizenship – have ensured their ethnic-identity-rooted capacity by being largely followed, notably by the Kurds and the left, through the decades-old organisations and by making the newly emerging pro-Kurdish HDP exterritorialy the second most voted political party in the general elections held in June and November 2015 and June 2018 which was not part of any electoral coalition.

This situation once more underlined that the transnational mobilisation of the Turks and Kurds is not limited only to the political developments in Turkey, Kurdistan, or Germany-Turkey and

France-Turkey relations. Enabling external voting has ascribed another meaning to the principally refugee Kurdish diaspora's objectives: openly engaging with the political activities of the pro-Kurdish party HDP at hand for 'the homeland' in Turkey. However, after this new advancement, some of the Kurds from Turkey had one major obstacle: the barrier of voting eligibility. Thus, the understanding of external voting in this study is extended to grasp the diasporas' partisan groups as a whole and does not discriminate against those who lack voting rights. At the same time, there are patterns of interaction between the diaspora groups that are formed independent of voting eligibility, and therefore, how and why the non-voter diaspora members are involved in external voting processes could significantly contribute to and redefine the knowledge of citizenship and external voting studies, extending the meaning and types of remote partisanship.

As stated earlier in the Introduction, the distinction between voters and non-voters is made for this study regarding the voting eligibility of the individuals for the Turkish elections. Among the informants, there emerged three categories that constitute what this study calls the non-voter individuals:

(1) Non-citizens: a German or French citizen with Kurdish/Turkish ethnic origin who has never acquired Turkish citizenship.

Four non-voter interviewees were in this category.

(2) Unnaturalised citizen: a former Turkish citizen with Kurdish/Turkish ethnic origin who has become a German or French citizen willingly, or who has been obliged to choose one of the citizenships and intentionally preferred to hold the German or French citizenship.

Ten non-voter interviewees were in this category.

(3) Refugee: a Turkish citizen with Kurdish/Turkish ethnic origin who resides in Germany and France under refugee status or who acquired the resident country citizenship after meeting the required conditions.

Fourteen non-voter interviewees were in this category.

Out of the 61 interviewees of this study, 28 were non-voters, while 33 were voters (see Appendixes 1, 2 and 3). Furthermore, as indicated above, they varied in their non-voter

categorisation. As noted in the Methodology section of the Introduction chapter, the interviews were conducted in respect to the snowball method. Therefore, the number of politically active non-voters came as a surprise, considering the proportion among the participants is relatively high, 46 percent. Even though the limits of the study do not permit us to comprehend the extent of the non-voters' impact on the home country electoral process, the case of Turkey in Germany and France revealed that their effect is indistinguishable from the voters when it comes to their political engagement during the electoral period, besides their voting eligibility and being part of the balloting committee at the designated polling stations. Therefore, to understand the significance of non-voters in the Turkish elections, I will point out how they used this newly opened political capacity in effecting the electoral processes for their homeland through external voting.

Throughout the fieldwork, 25 of the 28 non-voters (89 percent) that I encountered were people with Kurdish ethnic backgrounds, whereas, among all participants, the Kurds numbered 41 out of 61 (67 percent) (see Appendixes 1, 2 and 3). Hence, without disregarding the non-Kurdish HDP supporters, the findings mostly rely on the Kurdish non-voter individuals.

During the fieldwork, it was observed that the non-voter partisan Kurds, mainly those with refugee origin, see themselves as one of the key actors of the election campaigning, who 'must' shoulder the responsibility of mobilising the voters for the pro-Kurdish party by emphasising the ready voter base of the diaspora that would favour the HDP. Refugee status is granted to the political refugees by the country cases of this research, Germany and France, which are more established democratic countries; as a by-product, this offers a freer political field where these political refugees could seek and make use of opportunities to participate/organize/mobilise more fully (as citizens – or despite being citizens – yet with no fear of expatriation/arrest) in their host countries. With respect to that, the most visible strategy of these mostly refugee partisans was, unquestionably, the utilisation of their *known community sphere* (Van Hear & Cohen, 2017), the Kurdish cultural centres, as unofficial HDP election coordination centres: the sources of the ready voter base. An interviewee of refugee origin, co-founder of the local Kurdish cultural centre, stated on this issue:

We have been around for decades, fighting for the Kurds in and outside of Kurdistan. These local centres are where we breathe, where we are strong. We are thousands in number. Now there are elections in Turkey, and many of us in Germany still have Turkish citizenship. What we do here is to mobilise the eligible ones for the HDP. (Interviewee no. 21)

Unlike other Turkish political parties, the HDP did not have an official headquarters to coordinate the out-of-country electioneering.[314] The HDP's overall external campaigning strategies were very much parallel to the strategies of other Turkish political parties. Yet the HDP's were organised and regulated within the diaspora by local and small-scale associations that do not identify themselves with the HDP but with their ethno-nationalist Kurdish identity through the above-mentioned Kurdish cultural centres. A former Turkish citizen described this specific case:

After losing my sister in a battle with the Turkish army, I dedicated myself to the Kurdish cause from Germany. Since 1992 I am doing it here at every possible level. I cook for the cultural centre, I donate for Kurdistan, I march for Kurdistan, I teach Kurdish and so on. I did not even build a family of my own not to be distracted. I was here before the HDP, and eventually, the HDP will be banned like the other Kurdish parties, and I will be still here for anything about Kurds and Kurdistan. I am nothing but just one grain of sand on a beach. (Interviewee no. 8)

A few of the interviewees criticised the perception that grants the HDP's extraterritorial success and existence to the HDP rather than to the effort of the Kurdish associations that are established mainly by political refugees who are non-voters. A former Turkish citizen, as well as an ex-guerilla, said:

I am not amused hearing about the misbelief of the supporters here, which is the Turkish HDP's input in organisations here. NAV-DEM pretty much did everything, and all alone here. … Let's not forget that besides Selahattin

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Demirtaş [now imprisoned, former co-leader of the HDP], the [Kurdish] diaspora don't know the MP candidates' names here. Why would they go for hundreds of kilometres to see a candidate that they do not even know? Only because they know that as a Kurdish community we should act together, we should show that we are united; that's why they come to the rallies. (Interviewee no. 2)

On the other hand, what can be depicted from this study's preliminary findings concerning the self-realised Kurds (especially the children of the political refugees) is that, as long as they are part of the cause, they do not mind which position they take a role in for the Kurdish cause. A non-voter interviewee stated:

I was 12, and I didn't know that I was Kurdish before I came to France [from Turkey]. My family kept me intentionally away from anything Kurdish here. However, I ended up going there [Kurdish cultural centre] anyway. I learned about my identity. Then I went to Kobane voluntarily. I was studying medicine at the time. I learned the Kurdish language there. Now I am back after two years, working for the HDP. I am not paid, I will not be paid [laughing], I don't plan to have a family in the foreseeable future. What I know is, I will always be here whether it is HDP, or another political party or another initiative that would do anything beneficial for the Kurdish cause. (Interviewee no. 40)

Furthermore, traditional channels of campaigning as canvassing or directing public meetings were not conducted by the official party members in the case of the HDP, as it extraterritorially does not have formal 'membership' like the other Turkish parties, not to mention paid professionals/party staffers for mobilising their voters. As detailed in Chapter II, NAV-DEM in Germany and CDK-F in France took the lead during the June 2015, November 2015, and June 2018 Turkish electoral periods by unofficially declaring themselves as the local election coordination centres of the HDP, and the communities that were forming these local associations have become the aggregators of voters. A former Turkish, refugee-origin HDP partisan commented on this issue:

By now, I am OK to hear that, especially from the unaware HDP supporters in Turkey, 'HDP does not have money, so the rallies abroad were funded by the HDP supporters living there'. We laugh at such comments here. The truth is the HDP does not exist here but in the Kurdish associations. We [members of the Kurdish cultural centres] knocked door to door. We arranged different councils depending on the Kurdish cities that would target Kurds coming from different cities so that the Kurdish dialect and other sensitivities would not be disregarded. We did not get an order from anywhere to do that. We at our councils at Europe level as well as country and local levels decided on such matters. (Interviewee no. 16)

Parties in the parliament in Turkey, like many other nations, have state-given funds for their domestic campaigning.[315] Since the HDP was not in the parliament before the June 2015 election as a party, it had no state support for the June 2015 electoral period. Therefore, the support it received for domestic and international campaigning consisted of donations, particularly from the external supporters. On that matter, a non-voter Turkish citizen said, "We are used to doing charity events and gathering money and sending it to Turkey. So, after the foundation of the HDP, we did it for the HDP's campaigns in Turkey. No need to mention, *hevals* know the importance of sharing" (Interviewee no. 34). Two other former Turkish citizens made a similar emphasis on their capacity as local cultural centres in collecting donations for the campaigning expenditures (Interviewee no. 19 and Interviewee no. 23).

Another campaigning strategy that the major political parties and the unofficial HDP election coordination centres emphasised was the shuttle bus services to transport voters from their homes or designated spots to the polling stations. In addition, as detailed in Chapter II, the organisation coordinated an information campaign, publicising in at least 68 cities in Germany the contact details of more than 70 NAV-DEM affiliated local associations, and in France at least 12 cities with the help of over 24 CDK-F related local associations as well as other

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[315] An administrative provision enacted in 2008 prohibits election campaigning outside Turkey. The OSCE noted that the rule was violated by most major political parties in both the June and November 2015 elections. In February 2017, a ruling expanded and confirmed the rule, stating that propaganda abroad or at border crossings was not permitted. However, since no criminal liability is attached to the provision, it is left as a 'moral obligation'.

diaspora organisations,[316] so that voters could locate the nearest information point to have their election-related questions answered. An interviewee stated:

> I left my Turkish citizenship happily years ago. But once this remote voting came to the scene, I had a heartache that lasted a night because I thought I am useless for my community. The first thing in the morning, I went to the Kurdish cultural centre in my city, talked to the other *hevals*. Then I decided to use some of my annual leave and be one of the many drivers, since I have a car to pick up people in my election region and drive them to the polling stations. This is the least I can do. (Interviewee no. 1)

Another non-voter interviewee, a resident of France, mentioned her successful involvement in the transportation of the people:

> I asked my mother about what I can do for my [Kurdish] community [during the elections]; she told me that I could help people to reach the voting stations. *Heval* X [name withdrawn] gave me a list at the Kurdish centre of people who need transportation from their homes to the polling station, and I did it. I may not be able to vote for the HDP, but I know I helped many more to vote on my behalf. (Interviewee no. 55)

Furthermore, non-voters, even before the enfranchisement for non-resident citizens was extended by Turkey, were already attempting in various ways to use their new citizenship, that is, their country of residence, to promote Kurdish politics (Yener-Roderburg, 2018; Toivanen & Yener-Roderburg, forthcoming). As early as 2000, quite a few German citizens of Kurdish origin signed a petition that addressed the German Bundestag, which is important to note here:

> 500,000 people of Kurdish descent live in Germany. Every third of us is a German citizen. We are 150,000 German citizens of Kurdish descent and have a right to respect and recognition of our culture, our language and our national origin […] We live in a democratic Europe. We do not want that our nationality, our language and culture is just as suppressed here as it is in our

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[316] These organisations were not limited to those mentioned that detailed in Chapter II.

regions of origin. There we are terribly suppressed, our language is forbidden, our parties, newspapers and journals are persecuted. […] A signal must be sent from Europe that this persecution of Kurds can no longer be tolerated. 150,000 Kurds with German citizenship have the same rights to respect and support of their nationality, tradition, language and culture as the Sorbic, Danish, and Friesean minorities […]. (Deutsch-Kurdischer Freundschaftsverein – Nawend, October 2000, cited in Østergaard-Nielsen, 2016, p. 79)

This action shows not only the Kurds' way of utilising their 'citizenship card' to generate the possibilities of holding a recognised identity with certain rights in their new countries that they brought from their 'homeland', but could also be interpreted as the extent of the Kurds' integration into German political culture. More recently, there have been further examples of the involvement of German citizens of Kurdish origin in German politics. Some of these people see their citizenship as a way of endorsing Kurdish politics, when possible, throughout the electoral periods of Turkey as Kurdish citizens in their countries of residence. Therefore, Germany is a significant example that provides a fruitful ground to understand the extent of use of the political field by the mentioned individuals. As briefly stated in Chapter II, the Kurdish issue is not a new topic for the German political parties. In particular, the left-wing parties – the Left Party (German: *die Linke*), Alliance '90/The Greens (German: *Bündnis 90/Die Grünen* or *Grüne*), and the Social Democratic Party of Germany (German: *Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands*, SPD) – have updated their Kurdish issue plans in parallel to what is happening in Kurdistan, which was also affected by Turkey's new agenda of external voting (SPD, 2021, March 18).

This situation stems mainly from the active participation of Kurds in these parties at the state and municipality level of the city and district councils. In particular, the far-left Left Party offers a highly critical political platform which the Kurds prefer to be part of to raise awareness about the Kurds' problems in Kurdistan, particularly in Turkey. When the 2017 German Bundestag is considered, four of the 14 Turkey-originating MPs are self-described Kurds.[317] According to the

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[317] Canan Bayram (Alliance '90/The Greens), Evrim Sommer (the Left Party), Sevim Dağdelen (the Left Party), and Gökay Akbulut (the Left Party).

results of the 2021 elections, German Bundestag currently has 18 Turkey-originating MPs and three of these MPs are self-described Kurds.[318]

Some 10 are Alevis (a few are overlapping) who also belong to the Turkey-originating Kurdish and Alevi communities that have become supportive of the HDP throughout the Turkish elections and remain supportive of the cases mushrooming against the HDP by issuing updated statements (Die Linke, 2015, March 30; Sommer, 2021, June 17). The three Left Party MPs among them in the 2017 Bundestag are all children of politically motivated refugees who are non-voters, passionate advocates of the Kurdish problems within the German Bundestag and outside the Parliament against the regional governments and Germany's position on Kurd-related issues. A non-voter, Sevim Dağdelen, one of the highly vocal Kurdish MPs in the Bundestag since 2005, has launched several debates against Germany's foreign policy in the Parliament regarding the Turkish military attack on the Kurdish city Afrin, and is also a known HDP supporter (Dagdelen, 2018, March 15; Die Linke, 2015, June 4). A few other non-voter respondents of this study, as well as another Kurdish MP of the Left Party, Gökay Akbulut, [319] are also members of German parties at the regional/local level and at the same time highly involved in the Kurdish associations and showing open support for the HDP during the Turkish elections (Akbulut, 2018, June 25).[320]

The above statements by non-voter partisans show that the changes to the Turkish election law in 2012 not only enabled external voting but also generated a new space where non-resident non-voter Kurds have become transnational political actors with an unavoidable political capacity in effecting the electoral processes for their homeland. The non-voter pro-HDP individuals also show that the non-electoral ways of political engagement, particularly mobilising the electorates, are far from quantifiable, yet more importantly, are hard to overlook and stand as an important concept for external voting studies.

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[318] The Turkey-originating MPs after the 2021 elections are Canan Bayram (Alliance '90/The Greens), Sevim Dağdelen (the Left Party), and Gökay Akbulut (the Left Party). However, another MP of Kurdish origin was selected in the German Bundestag (Alliance '90/The Greens), and Kassem Taher Saleh is from Iraqi Kurdistan (Bas News, 2021, September 29).

[319] See the following link for more information on Akbulut: https://goekay-akbulut.de/ueber-mich/

[320] Interviewee no. 19 and interviewee no. 29.

2. HDP's *veritable*, *situational*, and *precarious* remote supporters

Chapter II elaborated the institutional level of support for the HDP by the migrant organisations originating from Turkey in the country cases, Germany and France. Due to the limits of this research, however, the organisations were narrowed down to three categories with the help of two criteria:[321] ethnic organisations (NAV-DEM and CDK-F), belief organisations (AABF and FUAF), and trade unions (DIDF). As also observed, whether openly or not, the institutional support these organisations show for the HDP, regarding the incentives, has many commonalities that reveal themselves more vividly at the individual level. The overlapping interstices of various diaspora groups/individuals are not only limited to the mentioned migrant organisations. On the contrary, such institutions are high in number, and accordingly, the variety of supporting actors at an institutional or individual level turns the HDP into a political party that creates a microcosm.

The analysis of Chapter II, which dropped the number to three major supporting groups that cover the diaspora organisations that were particularly prominent throughout the June and November 2015 elections, is also applicable for the HDP supporters: (1) veritable organisations, (2) situational organisations, and (3) precarious organisations.[322] Moreover, the same categorisation is also valid when we categorise the individual level of supporters in respect to the analysis of the qualitative data gathered from the pro-HDP individuals who are members of these organisations, and also from other organisations such as the Union of Kurdish Associations in Germany (Kurdish: *Komeleya Karkerên Kurdistan*, KOMKAR), the Turkish Community Centre in Frankfurt (Turkish: *Türk Halk Evi*, German: *Türkisches Volkshaus Frankfurt am Main*), the Cultural Association of Migrant Workers from Turkey (French: *l'Association culturelle des travailleurs immigrés de Turquie*, ACTIT), the Socialist Party of Oppressed (Turkish: *Ezilenlerin Sosyalist Partisi*, ESP), and even from the Republican People's Party (Turkish: *Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi*, CHP). The interesting point here is that the thematic coding implemented on these

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[321] Recalling Chapter II, section 3.2., the criteria are as follows: (a) the diaspora organisations should have had a political stance favouring the HDP throughout the Turkish electoral periods of the June and November 2015 elections. The second criterion, (b) is about covering organisations that have different degrees of support for this party.

[322] Here recalling Duverger's (1976) degrees of participation. See Introduction section 5.5. for the adaptation of Duverger's degrees of participation to the research at hand.

supporters' incentives brings us certain prioritisation similarities in their reasoning for supporting the HDP of the following organizations: NAV-DEM, CDK-F, AABF, FUAF, and DIDF.

2.1. Similarities and differences depending on support levels among pro-HDP individuals

(1) Veritable supporters: Among veritable supporters, similarities showed themselves according to mother tongue. Most of these supporters were native speakers of at least one of the Kurdish dialects, and those who did not speak Kurdish were of Kurdish descent or had a Kurdish partner. Almost all interviewees could speak in Turkish but showed reluctance in speaking the language, particularly at an event organised by the Kurdish cultural centres (see Appendix 5). In France, the French language ability was claimed to be higher than the German language ability of those in Germany. Although this research did not aim to answer this question, the difference in the host country language ability is likely to stem from having higher exposure to the local community in France than in Germany.

There was less of a generational difference among the participants of this research compared to the other supporters. However, the first generation came in the late 1980s and also consisted of self-realised Kurds, thanks to the politically motivated ones.

The empirical analysis showed no income differences among the veritable supporters. But specific differences are observed depending on the residence country. In Germany, the participants were primarily political refugees and guest workers, while there were more civil servants and business owners in France. The relation could be linked to France's citizenship law (see Chapter II, section 1.2.).

Activity during the sending country's election-free periods is high within the organisations the veritable supporters participate in. And voting eligibility is highly mixed among the veritable supporters. All groups exist among non-voters and voters, and it is hard to differentiate one from another in their non-electoral mobilisation strategies.

(2) Situational supporters: Among the situational supporters, depending on their region of origin, the participants' mother tongue varied between a Kurdish dialect, Turkish and Kurdish, or

Turkish only. Compared to the veritable supporters, the situational ones claimed to have higher language ability in both country cases' official languages, German and French. None had German or French descent, though some interviewees have mixed-race families.

Among the AABF and FUAF's situational supporters, the generational gap was the widest among the supporting organisations due to the highly active youth branches. There is not enough information on the situational supporters' generational differences besides the AABF and FUAF.

This group did not necessarily show any income range among the participants in Germany, yet mostly first- or second-generation working-class members were present. Highly skilled workers among the interviewees do exist in the younger generations, such as engineers, teachers, academics, and so on. On the other hand, situational supporters in France showed more variety in respect to their income levels. Despite the existing working class among the first- and second-generation migrants, the French interviewees included more skilled workers than working-class people and more skilled workers than that was in Germany, such as journalists, academics, teachers, photographers, and engineers.

Activity during the election-free periods of the sending country and host country is high within the organisations that the situational supporters take part in (please see Chapter II, section 2.2.1.). Concerning voting, eligibility is highly mixed among the situational supporters. All types of non-voters and voters exist in this group, and like in the case of veritable supporters, these individuals were hard to differentiate from one another through their non-electoral mobilisation strategies.

(3) Precarious supporters: Like the situational supporters, the participants, depending on their region of origin in Turkey, had a language skill in one of the Kurdish dialects or Turkish. The regional background of these individuals may vary but is very mixed; however, it was clear that compared to the situational supporters, very few could claim that they could speak Kurdish and identified as such. In that group, everyone I encountered could speak Turkish. And the precarious supporters stated that their language ability in both country cases' official languages was higher than that of the veritable and situational supporters. I did not come across anyone of German or French descent in the fieldwork, though some members have mixed-race families.

Precarious supporters of the field work of this study mostly consisted of non-retired, working-class people; therefore, they were mostly second and third-generation migrants. These groups did not necessarily show any income difference, as they were primarily working-class people.

Activity during the sending country's election-free periods is high within the organisations that the precarious supporters take part in (please see Chapter II, section 2.2.1.). Voting eligibility was not necessarily mixed in this category, although one out of six precarious supporters was not an eligible voter. This is still not enough data to claim the significance of voting eligibility for the precarious voters, yet considering the reliability of their support for a party is highly doubtable, this claim may not necessarily be wrong.

2.2. Mobilisation motivations depending on support levels among pro-HDP individuals

Although this work does not aim to measure or reveal every possible motivation that brought about the HDP supporters abroad, some of the points made by the most visible partisans throughout the elections were repeated by the members of the same diaspora organisations. As I organised my data set according to diaspora organisations and their members, and by veritable, situational, and precarious modes of being remote associations and supporters, along with side data sets deduced from these original findings in parallel to the thematic coding, which NVivo helped to narrow down, the interviews revealed highly intermingled motivations for mobilisation, uniquely characteristic of the HDP-supporting individuals who had both electoral and non-electoral modes of political engagement, particularly mobilising the electorates: (i) seeing the party as equal to the Kurdish cause/Kurdishness, (ii) the possibility of descriptive representation, (iii) the support for the party constitution and election bulletin, (iv) strategic support, and (v) solidarity support.

One or more of these five motivations expressed by the HDP's remote supporters seem to encapsulate their mobilisation incentives to a greater extent. However, the interviewees whose institutions were categorised between veritable, situational, and precarious supporters presented consistencies in their primary preference/mention parallel to the mentioned institutional categorisation (Table 7).

As Table 7 shows, despite the differences in primary preference depending on the supporter level of the interviewees, many points overlap as well.

Table 7. The motivations of the pro-HDP organisations for their support

Supporter levels	Veritable	Situational	Precarious
Mobilisation motivations of the supporters	**NAV-DEM, CDK-F**	**AABK, FUAF**	**DIDFs**
1. *Seeing the party as equal to the Kurdish cause/Kurdishness*	✓ 1	✓ 3	✓ 4
2. *Descriptive representation*	✓ 2	✓ 1	-
3. *Support for the party constitution and election bulletin*	✓ 3	✓ 2	✓ 2
4. *Strategic support*	-	✓ 5	✓ 1
5. *Solidarity support*	✓ 4	✓ 4	✓ 3

Note: Numbers indicate the order of preference (from the most prioritised to the least prioritised)

2.2.1.   Seeing the HDP as equal to the Kurdish cause/Kurdishness

As the table indicates, veritable supporters identify their ethnic identity with the party and the party with their identity, which appeared as the strongest motivation for their HDP support and also turned them into partisans.

As discussed in Chapter II, section 3.2.1, NAV-DEM in Germany and CDK-F in France are organisations that operate as the roof for hundreds of other organisations linked to each other not only in the countries in which they function but also all over Europe. Despite variations in the NAV-DEM and CDK-F main objectives, these associations all promote Kurdish communities abroad and back in Kurdistan in several ways and provide socialising spaces where the members feel part of the Kurdish cause.

In relation to the HDP, the support of the interviewees' self-identification with the community as well as with the party stemmed from many points. As highlighted in Chapter II, the organic tie between the banned Kurdish parties and the successor HDP, the Kurdish movement, and the Kurdish diaspora has generated a ready voter base. Throughout the fieldwork, I have observed that the Kurds see themselves as the key actors serving as mobilising agents of the HDP, independent of the HDP. Therefore, it was their responsibility to wake up the diaspora that would favour the HDP. The most visible and common campaign approach of the HDP in Germany and France was the mass rallies that were headlined by party members or candidates from Turkey, particularly for the two parliamentary elections in 2015. Recalling the statement of Interviewee no. 2 on this specific point is significant:

> I am not amused hearing about the Turkish HDP's input in organisations here. NAV-DEM pretty much did everything alone here. Of course, I participated in the rallies that the HDP had here. Let's not forget that, besides Selahattin Demirtaş, the [Kurdish] diaspora don't know the HDP's candidates' names here. Why would they go for hundreds of kilometres to see a candidate that they don't know? Only because they know that as a Kurdish community, we should act together, we should show that we are unified; that's why they come to the rallies. The HDP means being Kurdish to these people. (Interviewee no. 2)

One of the main incentives that came naturally to most Kurdishness-prioritising interviewees was the political capital they acquired from their relatives or closed informal networks, which turned itself into a strong connection to Kurdishness and to the HDP. Germany has the largest population of Kurdish-speaking immigrants in Europe, followed by France. The lion's share of these migrants came as political asylum seekers during the 1990s due to the Turkish state's war against the Workers Party of Kurdistan (Kurdish: *Partîya Karkerên Kurdistan*, or Turkish: *Kürdistan İşçi Partisi* or *Apocular*, PKK), a conflict that has underpinned this population's sense of being *the other* identity. Therefore, for most of the Kurdish people, being an HDP sympathiser was part of their inherited identity. In the case of this study's interviewees, being part of already existing supranational forms of social organisations has also shown itself as a significant

determinant. For example, one of the interviewees who is a member of a NAV-DEM affiliated women's organisation stated:

> The Kurdish Women's organisation is my home; while I was a child, I did not know why I never could fit anywhere else, even among my Turkey-originating peers in Germany. My aunt was coming here [the women's organisations], and she started taking me here with her at one point. I discovered my identity here, and I figured out why I have never felt suited to Turkish-speaking children. I finally felt useful for my [Kurdish] community. Now this place is my home. I am part of almost everything; charity events, protests that this place is hosting. And now there are the Turkish elections. I am here, and I will be here for anything that is needed for the HDP. (Interviewee no. 11)

Recalling the comments of Interviewee no. 8 underlines that strong long-distance nationalism is also validated for the home country elections, which, in the case of the Kurdish cause, is not limited to Kurdistan but spills over to out-of-country context as remote partisanship:

> After losing my sister in a battle with the Turkish army, I dedicated myself to the Kurdish cause from Germany. Since 1992 I am doing it here at every possible level. I cook for the cultural centre, I donate to Kurdistan, I march for Kurdistan, I teach Kurdish and so on. I did not even build a family of my own not to be distracted. I was here before the HDP, and eventually, the HDP will be banned like the other Kurdish parties, and I will be still here for anything about Kurds and Kurdistan. I am nothing but just one grain of sand on a beach. (Interviewee no. 8)

2.2.2. Descriptive representation

The point that came as the second most preferred incentive factor for the veritable supporters, and the first for the situational supporters, is the descriptive representation that the HDP offers. The HDP offers descriptive representation in the Turkish Parliament for listed elected positions, which was seen as significant to many Alevis. For the Kurdish community, the HDP was seen as the successor of the previously banned and dissolved pro-Kurdish parties (see Table 5).

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Therefore, it was not surprising that as the HDP was already seen as the Kurdishness-promoting party, the descriptive representation for the Kurdish community already had an accomplished promise. One interviewee on this issue commented as follows: "if the external voting possibility was there during the DEHAP era or DTP[323] or any other Kurdish party, *we* could have done nothing less for these parties" (Interviewee no. 28).

In Chapter II, the situational, institutional support of the AABF and FUAF for the HDP was detailed. The individual level of support of the Alevi community affiliated with the organisations shows parallels to the institutional support but also provides nuances, especially considering that the continuous unwavering support for the HDP from every Alevi member of these institutions is not yet certain. However, the Alevi community's incentives overlap with the veritable supporters in a number of points, mainly differentiating them from the precarious supporters, DIDF members.

A well-known Alevi figure in Europe, the former chairman of the AABF, Turgut Öker, was offered an electable spot on the party list and elected to the Turkish Parliament by the HDP in the June 2015 election. Turkish parties are known to be non-descriptive with their candidate listing; thus, this step was viewed as unique by many Alevis, which was one of the reasons why they have become situational supporters in the country cases. On this issue, an AABF member stated:

> We [Alevis] are not recognised by our homeland [Turkey]. But once Öker
> would step into the Parliament, they will have to recognise us the way we are.
> Alevism cannot remain a taboo; we are here, we exist! The HDP is making
> this possible. (Interviewee no. 50)

The situational support that the Alevis showed carried Öker to the HDP party list once more to be elected as an MP for the November 2015 Snap Election. However, the party did not gain the necessary votes in the district of his candidacy; therefore, he could not make it to the parliament (ANF News, 2018, May 21; Hürriyet, 2015, November 3). Nevertheless, the HDP planned two seats for MPs from the diaspora for the 2018 general elections. Turgut Öker from Germany was on the HDP's MP list for the 2018 election as the first candidate on the list for Istanbul, which

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[323] The predecessors of the HDP, please see Chapter II and Table Kurdish parties for more detail.

guaranteed his seat in the parliament if the electoral success was achieved. However, the Supreme Electoral Council rejected his candidacy on the grounds of committing acts of defamation against President Erdoğan (Artı Gerçek, 2018, May 25). Since then, Öker has been banned from leaving Turkey because the charges against him have not been dropped. The support given for Öker by the diaspora Alevis is getting stronger, and their HDP stance has only been strengthened. The press statements and gatherings for Öker in the country cases are met with the approval of many AABF and FUAF members. On one of those occasions, one interviewee stated: "They [the government] think that we will lessen in number by trying to silence Öker; they are wrong! They cannot silence him, they cannot silence us, they cannot silence the HDP!" (Interviewee no. 12).

Alevis were not the only groups that were attracted by HDP's descriptive representation principle. The first openly stated Yazidi (Ali Atalan and Feleknas Uca), Syriac (Erol Dora), and Armenian (Garo Paylan) candidates were also listed as elected from the HDP when the party passed the 10 percent threshold in the June 2015 elections (Hall, 2015, June 9). Since then, the HDP has kept these communities represented by known community members. The first MP from the Yazidi community was also significant for some non-resident nationals in the country cases, which had a role in making them veritable supporters. One Yazidi member of the CDK-F affiliated organisation stated:

> I have always been a Kurdish cause sympathiser, yet I was not necessarily active in these circles until I saw the Yazidi candidate, especially Feleknas Uca. She is also one of us [diaspora Kurd]. For two years, I am actively working for the HDP here [France]. I have worked in various positions, on various occasions, from very local to regional… This is not my actual job, of course, I am volunteering. I am doing it for the community. (Interviewee no. 41)

2.2.3. Support for the HDP's constitution and election bulletin

The HDP party constitution[324] and the HDP party bulletins for each of the three elections[325] focused on in-country issues and did not mention the non-resident voters.

However, due to the greater attention that was given in these documents to particular issues – elevating religious and ethnic minority rights, introducing gender quota to increase the number of women participation, promoting justice for political prisoners, introducing education in the mother language, abolishing the election threshold, equal and democratic citizenship, and so on – for three of the supporting groups, the party constitution, as well as the bulletins, presented importance for their motivation for support. One of the interviewees who actively took part in DIDF mobilisation in France pointed out the importance of the election bulletin for him:

> The HDP is the only party which really has a democratic programme in its election bulletin. There are not many of us who read these documents anymore. But I am always sceptical about party programmes. Yet, it is very clear to me that the HDP tries hard to grasp every part of the society that has been long neglected. The party programme really helped me to decide in favour of the HDP for the past three elections. (Interviewee no. 54)

Furthermore, it is observed that the egalitarian gender ideology of the HDP in its official party documents impacts the women diasporans in the country cases. The co-leadership concept in which both men and women lead the country, gender quotas, and the active Women's Congress are highly prominent party approaches that have become important elements for its supporters since the party was established. In the June 2015 elections, the HDP adopted a 50 percent gender quota and 10 percent LGBTQI+ candidates, while the only other party with a gender quota is the

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[324] For the HDP party constitution see the following link: https://www.hdp.org.tr/tr/parti-tuzugu/10/

[325] Election bulletins of the HDP:

- For the June 2015 elections see Cumhuriyet (2015, April 21) at the following link: https://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/haber/iste-hdpnin-secim-bildirgesinin-tam-metni-259275

- For November 2015 elections see BBC (2015, October 2) at the following link: https://www.bbc.com/turkce/haberler/2015/10/151001_hdp_secim_bildirge

- For June 2018 elections see the following link: https://www.dw.com/tr/hdp-se%C3%A7im-bildirgesini-a%C3%A7%C4%B1klad%C4%B1/a-43776236

CHP (33 percent).[326] As a result of this election, a record number of women, 96, secured a seat at the Turkish National Assembly (Lyons, 2015, June 8). One-third of the women were HDP MPs, despite the fact that the HDP shared the third and the smallest party position with the Nationalist Action Party (Turkish: *Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi*, MHP). Following the 2018 elections, 104 female MPs, now 101, initially made it to the parliament, pushing female representation to its highest level in Turkish political history. The HDP once again has the highest female MP ratio with 41.8 percent, whereas the proportion of women's representation in the parliament is 17.3 percent.[327]

Every female interviewee of this study underlined the importance of women's representation in the party and how important that is for them. At an international event organised by the Kurdish women's organisations of Germany and France in Frankfurt in 2018, one of the keynote speakers underlined the importance of the HDP's stance on women for the rest of the world. This speech received remarkable applause from the audience of 440 women from all around the world. Following the event, I talked to a few women about this specific speech, one of whom stated:

> I had no interest in being part of this event. But after the HDP's foundation, after I saw the number of women elected [as deputy members in the Turkish Parliament], taking as many responsibilities, I told myself as a mother of three, as a working woman, I can be part of this too. I should do more for my community, for the women. Since then, I am more active in every aspect. I was in the organising committee of this organisation until last year; I served for two years to the [local Kurdish cultural] centre as a co-leader. (Interviewee no. 13)

2.2.4. Strategic support

The fieldwork also suggested that the AABF and FUAF eligible-voter members had strategic incentives to cast votes favouring the HDP, which appeared as the last among the most preferred incentives for HDP support. On the other hand, for the precarious pro-HDP individuals, the

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[326] See Rosa Burç's (2019) article for more on the HDP's success as a 'women's party'.

[327] More information and also an updated data on the demographics of the Turkish Grand Assembly can be reached via the following link: https://www.tbmm.gov.tr/develop/owa/milletvekillerimiz_sd.dagilim

DIDF members, strategic voting was the primary reason for their HDP mobilisation. The belief that the voter volume would help the HDP surpass the 10 percent national threshold for entering the parliament suggested a possible loss of parliamentary majority for the AKP and the need for a coalition partner to form a government. This strategy of Alevi organisations was particularly prominent amongst Alevis who have been decades-long CHP sympathisers. The AKP move against the Kurds during the 2015 electoral period ensured that the general inclination of AABF members to favour the HDP increased in size and intensity. And from that point on, it has been generally claimed that the AABF and FUAF members vote either for HDP or CHP, or vote for HDP as a CHP supporter just to make HDP sweep past the 10 percent threshold so as not to leave CHP 'alone' in the parliament, as well as to diminish the number of AKP MPs so that AKP cannot secure the majority in the parliament. The HDP managed to gain seats in parliament in the June and November 2015 and June 2018 elections by surpassing the threshold (see Table 2). A member of the North Rhine-Westphalia state council of the CHP, as well as an AABF member, emphasised this situation:

> I told everyone around me we all need to vote for the HDP. What will this country [Turkey] do with a tyrant like that [President Erdoğan] without having the HDP on the side of CHP in the parliament? They will enact everything they like, and we will all watch. So, I convinced everyone in this [Alevi cultural] centre that HDP is necessary for the future of Turkey; it has to pass this threshold. (Interviewee no. 25)

Some CHP supporters, on the other hand, despite having no attachment to any groups that the HDP put forward or not belonging to any circles that have a stance in favour of the HDP, like the case above, still developed a political view that even went so far as to mobilise electorates for the HDP so that the party would get more than 10 percent of the total votes and make it to the parliament. This situation was a real phenomenon known as "conditional vote" (Turkish: *emanet oy*) for some of the in-country electorates (Dag, 2018, p. 1263), yet not the CHP's institutional approach (Hamsici, 2015, June 2; Ulusal Kanal, 2018, June 28), and also had its spillovers in the country cases. One of the CHP sympathisers on this issue highlighted in the 2018 interview that she is more of an anti-AKP person than a CHP partisan. She further underlined that:

I have always supported the CHP. However, since the HDP came into play as the first left-wing opposition that is very close to being part of the parliament, I truly believe that I should be part of their struggle to bypass the threshold. The 10 percent threshold is such an undemocratic obstacle. It would be a great pity if the HDP would not make it to the parliament due to one or two points, and this is what all polls estimate. Since I do not believe that the total vote of the CHP will change too much, this time, I vote for HDP to stop AKP. Therefore, I am with some other CHP-partisan friends who are talking to our CHP-sympathising circles here [in France] so that at least some of their family members should vote for the HDP in the elections. Without having the HDP in the parliament, the CHP will have no power to challenge the poor governance of the AKP. (Interviewee no. 51)

For the DIDF interviewees, supporting HDP strategically was, as stated, the main reason. The interviewee in Strasbourg underlined that with a few other DIDF members throughout the 2015 electoral periods, they handed out 2000 brochures to Turkey-originating people within their reach in Grand Est on "the one-party caused democratic crisis Turkey was undergoing due to 10 percent national threshold" and visited over 250 households (Interviewee no. 43). He added:

We did not necessarily tell the people that we visited to vote for the HDP; we told these people one by one that why they should not vote for the AKP, MHP, or CHP.[328] I personally have always paid attention to not mentioning the HDP in our talks. I want people to decide for themselves. The HDP might be supported for that election, but it does not mean that they should be supported in the following election. (Interviewee no. 43)

During the electoral periods, the HDP's main aim has been to pass the threshold of 10 percent of the vote share as a party to secure seats at the Turkish parliament to achieve recognition of their long-lasting problems by home and host countries. All pro-HDP interviewees who were the veritable supporters showed their enthusiasm about the party's success in the elections during the

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[328] The three other parties made it to the Turkish Grand Assembly.

interviews, yet a few of them made it clear that, unlike what the majority (other than the veritable supporters) thinks, passing the threshold is not the real challenge of the HDP:

> Passing the threshold is not the major struggle. The real one would start especially after we get seats in the parliament, considering there is no real opposition [the main opposition party CHP] … Even if we cannot pass the threshold, do you think we will sit back and do nothing? We are used to using every drop of energy that we have for this purpose [resolution for the Kurdish question]; we will keep working, with a greater passion. (Interviewee no. 3)

KOMKAR[329] as an organisation did not show any support for the HDP due to the HDP's supporter base, which this study calls veritable supporters, overlapping with the PKK sympathisers abroad. However, some of its members showed precarious support for the HDP, although this support was not necessarily vocalised among the members, unlike in the DIDF case. DIDF's pro-HDP members, despite their precarious stance, were not cautious in their pro-HDP statements. By contrast, in my participant observation at a KOMKAR event (Participant observation no. 25) including five informal interviews and two in-depth interviews, the precarious support for the HDP was rather subtle among this group. These members' support, within the limit of this study, indicated an emphasis on strategic voting as their incentive. One interviewee who is an active KOMKAR member pointed out that despite holding Turkish citizenship, she had never had the intention to vote for any party before the June 2015 elections, and added:

> As a KOMKAR member, under the normal circumstance, I would not have thought about voting for any pro-PKK party, and I never have until the HDP. The HDP gave the impression that it could actually make it to the parliament by overcoming the 10 percent threshold, which will finally let the AKP lose its majority in the parliament to enable legislative reforms. This is what Turkey needs right now. This is going to benefit all the communities. I do not have any trust in the government. That's exactly why I put my initial perspective for the HDP to the side and have voted for it. (Interviewee no. 18)

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[329] Please see Chapter II for more on KOMKAR and its stance against PKK.

2.2.5. Solidarity support

Evidence from fieldwork revealed that solidarity appeared to be a significant incentive for the HDP supporters in all categories. Different groups have shown solidarity for various purposes. For example, for the Alevis in Germany and France, ethnic solidarity appeared as a significant factor in their support for the HDP. Ethnically, Kurdish Alevis have always been prominent actors in Alevi organisations in Germany and France, and to date, this situation has not changed (field notes of the author; Özkul, 2016). In that regard, it was not particularly surprising to find Kurdish Alevi members taking part in an alliance that provided the necessary grassroots for the HDP throughout the elections, independent of their attachment to their organisations, AABF and FUAF. A Kurdish Alevi member of the FUAF pointed out that the FUAF's support for the HDP did not change her political orientation because she would support the HDP independent of FUAF. However, she emphasised that her relatives, who are active members of the local branches of FUAF, did not have ethnic solidarity ties with the previous pro-Kurdish parties until the AABK's open support of the HDP (Interview no. 46). As another Kurdish Alevi AABF member noted:

> If it was not the Alevi Kurds, who are the active members here [in Germany] at the Alevi associations? The Alevis would not have any voice here. I cannot imagine not showing solidarity with the HDP at this stage. We have been vilified, marginalised. The HDP is the only party that embraces differences. I am for the HDP not because there is no other option, but because the HDP is the solution. (Interview no. 24)

A Turkish Alevi member of the FUAF, on the other hand, had a different way of thinking in his solidarity support for the HDP:

> I was honestly a CHP supporter, but since the AABK's stance as an institution favoured the HDP, this made me wonder. After careful thinking, I have also decided to campaign for the HDP here. And believe me, there are many Turkish Alevi friends who have a similar approach. We are opposing the AKP terror, MHP's nationalist acts. We are in solidarity with the HDP, and as a FUAF member, I am proud of where I am right now. (Interviewee no. 48).

Other groups were officially regarded as components of the Peoples' Democratic Congress (Turkish: *Halkların Demokratik Kongresi*, HDK)[330] that showed solidarity with the party and its mobilisation abroad. One of the most known components is the ESP, the party co-founded by Figen Yüksekdağ, also the former HDP co-leader who served alongside Selahattin Demirtaş, now imprisoned. Despite not having a prominent stance in either country case, the ESP still showed an essential presence with some dedicated members I came across during the fieldwork on more than a few occasions.

> I have been a part of the ESP France since it was founded in Turkey in 2010. Surely, once my organisation has become a part of a bigger cause, and Yüksekdağ appeared as a co-leader in that cause, I did not even blink before standing with them. I became part of the HDP's mobilisation efforts here [France]. In that respect, I can also safely say that HDP does not exist here but in its alliances. You cannot find anyone who is paid around. Everyone belongs to some other cause but acts together for the HDP. (Interviewee no. 42)

As a form of participant observation, I initially aimed to be one of the polling committee members for the November 2015 elections from the AKP's quota. However, my application was denied by the AKP's election coordination centres' local committee,[331] stating that my application was too late even for the waiting list, even though the electoral period lasted 18 days during the November elections (Participant observation no. 9). I then tried with the CHP, and after two phone calls in relation to the connection that I have built with the HDP community in Essen, the CHP reserved a seat for me in the Essen voting station for two days. While officially exercising my duty as a polling clerk, I also observed that some of the HDP and CHP officers at the polling station had a close contact, sharing their lunch and bringing each other coffee/tea while in service, which was not always the case in my experience, considering that I have served as a polling clerk six different times for three different electoral periods at five different polling stations/cities in two of the country cases (Participant observation no. 1, 4, 9, 10, 15, and 17). These experiences showed me that the solidarity engagement of some of the CHP members with

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[330] See Chapter II section 3.2.1 for more on the HDK's formation and structure.

[331] Please see Chapter II for AKP's election coordination centres.

the HDP members is not necessarily a result of the CHP's favouring the HDP, but of some of its members' individual approaches.

3. Concluding remarks

The topic of external voting is becoming discussed more and more, yet there still has not been in-depth study of how campaigning and voter mobilisation has evolved, and of the migrant associations' mobilisation capacity in different countries and contexts. Nevertheless, the empirical research collected for this chapter indicates that the external voting policies to which non-resident eligible nationals are subjected has impacted the nationals abroad in four critical ways:

(1) It has been observed that the legislation giving rights to vote to the eligible citizens at the country of residence, while leaving the non-eligible nationals to languish without their voting rights, could not stop the non-eligible nationals from becoming remote supporters or remote partisans. All the interviews conducted for this study have signified that the interviewees involved in the party mobilisation through electoral and non-electoral ways as supporters have acted independently of their citizenship status. Extending voting rights to non-resident citizens does not mean that this new opportunity would remain a concern of the citizens only. It also does not mean that only the citizens residing abroad will be taking part in the electoral process of the homeland.

(2) The analysis of the qualitative data collected from interviewees who consist of HDP supporters in the country cases, Germany and France, presented that at the individual level, the HDP as a political party attracted various people from different backgrounds for different reasons that are depicted as interstices in the ways that they formed the party in the country cases, what this study calls a microcosm. As observed, the interviewees had different levels of electoral or non-electoral support for the party that varied among veritable, situational, and precarious. However, this variety, as shown, is not limited to one single reasoning for each participant. Each interviewee and participant observation underlined that the interstices are hard to count and cannot be reduced to a few points. Therefore, I suggest that there was a need among

these groups in the political realm that was already open for political action/participation – in this case, a newly born political party that would activate these groups as components of a microcosm (multi-diaspora community coalition or alliance formation), dependent on but also independent from each other. As I interviewed the participants on different occasions, it was also clear to me that many of the interviewees would not like to share a common place with each other. For example, among the CHP supporters, whether they were AABF or FUAF members, there was a solid resistance to being in the HDP rallies where the slogans and chants would be in Kurdish.

(3) The interviews also show that, when the individuals are part of the same organisation, the institutional support that these organisations offer regarding the incentives has a lot in common, which was presented at the individual level more intensely.

(4) From the interviews, it has also been understood that the HDP, as a homeland political party, overcame the difficulties of external voting and managed to attract sympathisers, who have become remote partisans, in unique ways which were not driven by the official party branches, but by the individuals who have self-attained themselves as HDP mobilisers. The strategies were not limited to the traditional channels but also included nontraditional ways of campaigning, such as convincing people by knocking on their house doors, encouraging vote share between the eligible members, organising charity events, arranging shuttle buses to transfer individuals to voting stations, and so on. These unique ways surfaced when looking at the highly decentralised individual and organisational approaches in generating partisanship and voter mobilisation.

Discussion and Conclusions

This study has been primarily concerned with transnational diaspora mobilisation around external voting and diaspora organisations' involvement in the homeland electoral process. However, due to the lack of empirical studies, the grounds on the turnout patterns of the nationals in extraterritorial districts vary in number yet to be clarified. That is why Chapter I investigated the Turkish political party history, the predominant regime, how small parties struggle with a number of obstacles to make it to the parliament, and the Turkish external voting experience to provide a more explicit discussion for the purpose of this research study.

As indicated in Chapter I, the Turkish case shows relatively high extraterritorial turnout compared to the majority of the nations that have extended enfranchisement to their non-resident citizens, although the implementation of the elections shows an apparent deficit regarding free and fair electoral periods. The high interest of the non-resident Turkish nationals in the Turkish elections does not necessarily stem from the reformed registration mechanisms but derives instead from the political and civil society actors' impact in fostering voters' mobilisation in the residence countries. With the extraterritorial vote-share success of the pro-Kurdish HDP, which is higher than the in-country share, we observe that the nationals who cast their votes were also proportionately more in favour of the small parties compared to the in-country cast ballots, which alone constitutes a credible case to demonstrate the impact as well as the significance of the diaspora grassroots, whether political or civil society initiated. These points make the Turkish external voting experience a significant empirical case.

In attempting to fulfil this aim, this case study has been guided by the following research questions which have been discussed about the pro-HDP diaspora organisations and individuals based in Germany and France throughout the first three extraterritorial general election experiences of Turkey in June 2015, November 2015, and June 2018:

> As a historic political moment, how does external voting lead diaspora organisations in favour of a homeland political party?

The three distinct chapters built upon each other to address three sub-questions emerging from the initial research question. The first sub-question that I asked was:

4. How and why do diaspora organisations mobilise for a homeland political party during the electoral process from the countries in which they are based?

Further, I asked the following two sub-questions in relation to the case of the pro-HDP diaspora organisations and individuals based in Germany and France:

5. How does voting eligibility impact the patterns of political engagement in the case of external voting?
6. What incentives do diaspora organisations and individuals have to become pro-HDP alliances/partisans in Germany and France?

Research answers and wider contributions

The main research question addressed in this case study was "How does external voting, as a historic political moment, lead diaspora organisations in favour of a homeland political party?" This research has found that the home country's political state, which shapes the legislative bodies, discriminates against and oppresses certain populations as well as certain political parties within that country (Chapter I), and when this situation has become one of the significant reasons for migration towards certain countries in which the diaspora groups become sizeable (primarily due to chain migration), "external voting" emerges as one of the ways in which certain diaspora groups, mainly the exile ones, become politically active for a political party from their countries of residence (Chapter II and Chapter III).

As the case political party, the HDP, in the aftermath of its foundation in 2011, gave birth to a highly complex political partisan landscape in Germany and France, various migrant organisations/associations and individuals took part. Yet the party supporters did not necessarily show solidarity or interaction, which makes the 'support' from abroad for the pro-Kurdish HDP a complex one. To illustrate, the support did not only come from the Kurdish organisations that were veritable supporters to any Kurdish political actor that emerged in the Turkish political scene; it also derived from the Alevi organisations that are willing to support the party for the

general elections. Moreover, there was a famous Alevi candidate who was going to represent them in the parliament descriptively.

Furthermore, the support also came from the CHP's remote sympathisers, who mostly wish for the HDP to pass the threshold to overthrow AKP's one-party rule in the Turkish parliament. In fact, these organisations and many others acted independently and, as expected, primarily built various motivations not limited to those mentioned, which led them to vocalise their support for the HDP throughout the Turkish general elections. This is why it would not be wrong to claim that all organisations represented the pieces of a microcosm.

The first sub-question asks the following:

1. How and why do diaspora organisations mobilise for a homeland political party during the electoral process from the countries in which they are based?

As Chapter II detailed, from the country cases of Germany and France, Turkey-originating diaspora organisations have dominated the social networks of the migrant groups who make up these organisations in these countries up until today. We have also observed how these organisations changed or adapted their own organisational structures in Turkey's political parties and their mobilisations during the Turkish elections from these countries. Even though it is hard to estimate the number of those organisations originating from Turkey, the mainstream Turkish parties' satellite organisations and the HDP's alliance organisations were underlined with more attention to the latter group in order to serve the aim of the study. To do that, Chapter II explored the three most found forms – religion, political, and ethnic and cultural poles – of Turkey-originating diaspora organisations in Germany and France. The HDF (later CHP) Berlin Union for the CHP, and the DIDF for the HDP exemplify the workers' unions; the DITIB or CCMTF for the AKP, IGMG for the RP, and AABF and FUAF for the HDP represent religious organisations; and the selected ethnic organisations were the Turkish Federation in Germany for the MHP and then also for the AKP, and the NAV-DEM and CDK-F for the HDP.

This study also revealed that Turkey-originating groups' vibrant pre-external voting support already represented the whole spectrum of Turkish political parties in Germany and France as early as the 1970s. This section not only shed light on the developments that emerged following non-resident voter enfranchisement in 2012 within the capacities of the diasporas' organisations

but also provided us with how mainstream and unconventional parties differ under such circumstances (external voting). In other words, with the introduction of external voting rights, the diasporas' organisations have become either the target of the sending-country political parties (here, the AKP, MHP, and CHP) or a self-motivated remote alliance of a 'homeland' political party (here, the HDP). To this end, it can be concluded that the available literature that acknowledged the diaspora communities as the stooge of the homeland political parties, Chapter II and Chapter III showed through HDP's alliances that they could be significant building blocks of political mobilisation abroad. These two chapters also revealed that these organisations, when they were satellites coordinated by their parties, did so through a mobilisation strategy including but not limited to providing shuttle buses for the electorates, canvassing, and organising rallies for the party elites.

However, as the empirical data indicates, when the party does not have a decentralised formation, like in the case of the HDP, it must also be understood that the HDP, as a homeland political party, overcame the difficulties of external voting and managed to attract sympathisers and turn them into supporters. These supporters, depending on the motivations to become HDP supporters at an institutional and individual level, can be categorised into three groups with the help of a typology that this study uniquely generated: veritable, situational, and precarious. These supporters at the individual level (also called remote partisans for this research) appointed themselves a role as HDP mobilisers in unique ways.

The mobilising strategies of the supporters were not limited to the above-mentioned traditional channels but also included nontraditional ways of campaigning, such as convincing people by knocking on voters' house doors, encouraging vote share between parties, organising charity events, arranging shuttle buses to transfer individuals to voting stations, and so on, depending on the supporting level that each institution and individual preferred. These unique ways surfaced when looking especially at the individual level, which was highly decentralised.

Furthermore, Chapters II and III have also shown that since the early decades of the emergence of the largely marginalised Turkey-originating diasporas' associations, Germany's pioneering role as the first destination country of the big Turkish masses has not changed to this day. Yet France was and still is a significant country for Turkey's diasporas to flourish and plays a critical role for Turkey's diasporas as the most prominent ally of Germany. The cross-border alliances of

the Turkey-originating migrant organisations also show the transnationality of the organisations that goes beyond the connection between sending country (here Turkey) and receiving country (here Germany or France), but rather grasps multiple countries, which in return has a vast effect, especially when external voting and the politicisation of these organisations are considered.

I argue that within research on political parties and external voting, there is a path-dependent perspective limited to the out-of-country reach of home-country parties, and with this research, I underline that it is necessary to acknowledge that the diaspora organisations cannot be regarded as solely led by a homeland political party in their functioning. In most of the political party studies that focus on how they operate abroad, "diaspora organisations" are seen as the target of the homeland political parties (Fliess, 2021; Koinova & Tsourapas, 2018), dismissing the possibility that some migrants and refugees from their respective countries may be keen builders of transnational spaces of their own that are highly political. Additionally, the new scholarly debates that connect the migrant associations to the homeland parties take the migrant organisations into consideration as the unit of analysis (Fliess, 2021; Paarlberg, 2020). Yet, despite the fact that oft-cited studies (e.g., Østergaard-Nielsen, 2003a) acknowledge the political strength of migrants and refugees' transnational political practices as significant networks, decades after such acknowledgement, diaspora organisations are yet to be credited as the source of the political mobilisation themselves in the external voting literature, which, however rapidly growing in recent years, is still limited.

Unlike the studies that often stress the influence of the sending-country parties on the diaspora organisations, with the findings of this research that particularises the role of these organisations on the homeland party in the host countries, I took a further step. The one-sided approach of solely focusing on the diaspora organisations disregards the fact that organisations with an autonomous structure or independent nature, and/or with their own will, are likely to develop an interest in homeland political parties and mobilise for them. Only a handful of studies, including my own, have acknowledged such a distinction (Yener-Roderburg, 2020), which necessitates further investigation, particularly in relation to politically motivated diasporas and their involvement in home-country politics via homeland political parties. Knowing more about how and why the diaspora organisations are involved or generate mobilisation for a homeland political party throughout the sending-country electoral period in the residence countries could

significantly contribute to the knowledge where diaspora studies and external voting studies overlap.

The second sub-question asks the following:

2. How does voting eligibility impact the patterns of political engagement in the case of external voting?

In the empirical chapter, Chapter III, it has been observed that the legislation gives voting rights to the eligible citizens at the country of residence while leaving the non-eligible nationals to languish without their voting rights, yet it has no capacity to stop the non-eligible nationals from becoming remote supporters or remote partisans. All the interviews conducted for this study have signified that the interviewees involved in the party mobilisation as supporters through electoral and non-electoral ways have acted independently of their citizenship status. Extending voting rights to non-resident citizens does not mean that this new opportunity would remain a concern of the citizens only. It also does not mean that only the citizens residing abroad will be taking part in the electoral process of the homeland.

This study contributes to external voting studies by analysing transnational diaspora mobilisation at an institutional and individual level in the realm of external voting. In doing so, this research advances the understanding of external voting, previously limited to the eligible voters, via providing empirical evidence that underlines the non-electoral engagement opportunities that emerge with external voting and do not exclude non-voters. Consequently, there is a need to reanalyse and redefine external voting, mainly in terms of how campaigning and voter mobilisation have evolved in different countries and contexts and expand their reach. Accordingly, the extent of external voting cannot be limited to diaspora groups who are eligible electorates.

As a result, when it comes to the actors of the practice, the common reduced understanding of external voting neglects the non-voter diaspora groups in the host countries, which creates the necessity of bringing about another approach that would be more inclusive. Thus, the extended version of Lafleur's (2013) external voting understanding was adopted throughout this study.

The altered version of the famous definition[332] is as follows: *External voting is the electoral process in which* active *(right to vote)* and passive voting rights *(right to get elected)* of qualified individuals *and the individuals who lack voting rights*, independently of their professional status … take part *in the electoral process* from outside the national territory in referenda or in supranational, national, subnational, or primary elections held in a country … *independent from whether* they hold citizenship but where they permanently or temporarily do not reside (Lafleur, 2013, p. 31, italics are my additions).

The third and final sub-question asks the following:

3. What incentives do diaspora organisations and individuals have to become pro-HDP alliances/partisans in Germany and France?

The 5.5-year empirical observations of this research showed that this political field – the sum of the interest of the diaspora members that either have social capital or grew solidarity between these marginalised groups – overlapped with the emergence of the enfranchisement of emigrant voting. However, the available studies in this area have yet to pay attention to the incentives of out-of-country voting to this extent, which leaves significant typological and conceptual gaps in the topic.

The analysis of the qualitative data collected from interviews with HDP supporters presented that at the individual level, the HDP as a political party attracted various people from different backgrounds for different reasons that are depicted as interstices in the ways that they formed the party in the country cases, what this study calls a microcosm. In this thesis, though I used the broadly outlined diaspora mobilisation categories of Sökefeld (2006), which he adjusted from social movement theories, the empirical findings have urged me to seek a more inclusive approach to expanding the concept of *framing* in the diaspora context, which does not show parallelism with social movement theory. In this study, I showed the need for a broader category that grasped the formation of the *different diasporas'* communities as a result of certain historical

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[332] Recalling Lafleur (2013): "[a]ctive and passive voting rights of qualified individuals, independently of their professional status, to take part from outside the national territory in referenda or in supranational, national, subnational, or primary elections held in a country of which they hold citizenship but where they permanently or temporarily not reside" (p. 31).

specific events (here, external voting) which would lead them in the same direction and create a microcosm – not necessarily to generate it as allies but to be parts of it. Therefore, despite acknowledging that diaspora mobilisation exists, I have also shown with this study that diasporas' mobilisation for the same cause yet independent of each other exists, and is a phenomenon yet to get the attention it deserves.

As stated, the interviewees had different levels of electoral or non-electoral ways of support for the party that varied among veritable, situational, and precarious. However, this variety, as shown, is not limited to one single reasoning for each participant. Each interviewee and participant observation underlined that the interstices are hard to count and cannot be reduced to a few points. Therefore, I suggest that there was a need among these groups in the political realm that was already open for political action/participation – in this case, a newly born political party that would activate these groups as components of a microcosm (multi-diaspora community coalition or alliance formation), dependent on but also independent from each other. In other words, the supporters of the HDP represent a microcosm marked by the various interstices that existed in the diaspora at large and could already have been categorised according to each groups' unique transnational social space.

As I interviewed the participants on different occasions, it was also clear that many of the interviewees would not like to share a common place with each other. For example, among the CHP supporters, whether they were AABF or FUAF members, had a solid resistance to being in the HDP rallies where the slogans and chants would be in Kurdish. Furthermore, the interviews also show that, when the individuals are part of the same organisation, the institutional support that these organisations offer regarding the incentives has a lot in common, which was presented at the individual level more intensely.

Résumé en français

Alors qu'à l'heure actuelle, près de 130 pays autorisent leurs citoyens non résidents à voter aux élections générales de leur pays d'origine, la Turquie est relativement en retard dans ce domaine, n'ayant introduit le droit de vote externe pour ses citoyens à l'étranger qu'en 2012. Depuis lors, 99 % des citoyens turcs à l'étranger ont le droit de voter aux élections turques depuis leur pays de résidence. Atteindre les électeurs non résidents est l'un des défis les plus importants auxquels sont confrontés les partis politiques contemporains. Néanmoins, en tant que l'un des derniers pays à avoir adopté le vote externe, la Turquie se distingue par le fait qu'elle a réussi à atteindre plus de 50 % des électeurs non résidents actifs, en organisant six scrutins externes en moins de quatre ans.

Ensemble, le Parti de la justice et du développement (AKP) et le Parti démocratique des peuples (HDP) ont reçu le soutien d'une majorité d'électeurs non résidents lors des élections générales de juin et novembre 2015, les premières organisées après la promulgation du droit de vote à distance en 2012. Dans ce contexte, les questions du pourquoi et du comment du succès du HDP ont été fréquemment posées dans la presse et par les experts. Le thème de cette étude est né de ma propre curiosité à l'égard de cette question. Les partisans du HDP étaient-ils plus actifs? les réseaux de base étaient-ils plus enracinés? Ou y avait-il des différences dans l'engagement et le soutien des électeurs locaux envers les partis à l'étranger et la mobilisation des organisations ? Quelle est la motivation des partisans du HDP à l'étranger ?

La présence politique de la Turquie à l'extérieur du pays est un sujet qui retient l'attention de nombreux chercheurs depuis des décennies. La littérature existante reconnaît que les immigrants turcs et leurs descendants en Europe sont socialement, ethniquement, religieusement et linguistiquement divers. Ils ont immigré en Europe dans des conditions et pour des motivations différentes, principalement des raisons économiques et politiques combinées à des regroupements familiaux.

Dans ce contexte, cette thèse vise à répondre à la question de recherche suivante : En tant que moment politique historique, comment le vote externe conduit-il les organisations de la diaspora en faveur d'un parti politique du pays d'origine ?

Pour pouvoir répondre à cette question générale en utilisant le cadre conceptuel de la mobilisation transnationale des diasporas et du vote externe, je pose les sous-questions suivantes concernant les partisans à distance du HDP en Allemagne et en France tout au long des premières expériences d'élections générales extraterritoriales :

1.   Comment et pourquoi les organisations de la diaspora se mobilisent-elles pour un parti politique de leur pays d'origine pendant le processus électoral à partir des pays dans lesquels elles sont basées ?

2.   Comment l'éligibilité au vote influe-t-elle sur les modèles d'engagement politique dans le cas du vote externe ?

3.   Quelles sont les incitations des organisations et des individus de la diaspora à devenir des alliances/partisans pro-HDP en Allemagne et en France ?

Afin de répondre à ces questions, cette thèse choisit le HDP de Turquie comme cas d'étude. En tant que parti nouvellement émergent lorsque la première élection générale incluant les électeurs expatriés a eu lieu en juin 2015, et en novembre 2015, le HDP a modifié les résultats de l'élection grâce à sa force extraterritoriale, recevant le quatrième plus grand nombre de votes dans le pays tout en arrivant en deuxième position extraterritorialement.

La force du parti ne peut se limiter, bien qu'elle soit liée de manière significative à ceux-ci, aux migrants " institutionnalisés " c'est-à-dire aux migrants affiliés à des organisations diasporiques, principalement constituées d'identités partisanes ethno-raciales/ethno-sectaires. Néanmoins, cette thèse ne rejette pas l'effet apparent des engagements politiques des groupes non partisans sur le succès extraterritorial du parti.

L'étude du succès électoral extraterritorial d'un parti politique nouvellement créé est appropriée car elle souligne que la portée à l'étranger des partis politiques du pays d'origine - qui est généralement problématique pour tous les partis du pays d'origine - génère le résultat inattendu d'un terrain égal dans leur défi de mobilisation des partisans éloignés. En conséquence, une compétition électorale relativement plus équitable a donné naissance à un résultat inimaginable dans le cas de la Turquie et à l'étranger : un parti multiculturel (le HDP) est devenu la principale opposition et s'est opposé au parti au pouvoir. En outre, ce succès s'est reflété dans les urnes et, par conséquent, dans le pays d'origine, la part de voix de ce parti a brisé la victoire écrasante du

parti au pouvoir, l'AKP, et a ébranlé le consensus dominant qu'il détenait depuis plus d'une décennie.

En mettant ainsi en évidence le changement conséquent dans la relation entre les différentes factions issues des différentes vagues de migration vers les pays de destination, je tente d'ouvrir la discussion au delà des thèmes des motivations à migrer et des cadres ethniques. Même si elles sont grossièrement exactes, les structures organisationnelles des partis à l'extérieur du pays, au sein desquelles les identités/associations de migrants sont également construites après l'émancipation à l'extérieur du pays en 2012. Cette approche s'est développée à partir de mon étude empirique de l'évolution des organisations de migrants. Soit elles ont été initiées par les partis politiques du pays d'origine en tant que satellites, soit celles qui existaient déjà ont suscité l'intérêt des partis politiques du pays d'origine en tant qu'alliances. Cependant, cette thèse n'essaie pas d'expliquer les organisations satellites des partis politiques dans les pays de résidence, car cela détournerait l'attention de cette recherche des membres de la diaspora vers la portée des partis politiques à l'étranger. Cette étude s'intéresse plutôt à la réponse des organisations décentralisées de la diaspora qui n'ont pas été confrontées à l'ingérence extérieure ouverte d'une unité de leur pays d'origine dans la construction de leur position politique. Et cette étude affirme que, suite à l'introduction du vote externe, certaines des organisations migratoires ont trouvé une occasion d'exprimer leurs intérêts et de chercher de nouvelles identités politiques, de nouveaux acteurs, de nouveaux domaines, ou simplement de nouveaux partis dans lesquels ils pourraient se transformer en partisans à distance.

Mes observations empiriques sur cinq ans et demi ont montré que ce champ politique - la somme des intérêts des membres de la diaspora qui disposent d'un capital social et/ou qui ont développé une solidarité entre ces groupes marginalisés - se superposait à l'émergence de l'émancipation du vote externe. Ainsi, les partisans du HDP représentent un microcosme marqué par les différents interstices qui existaient dans la diaspora au sens large et qui auraient pu être déjà catégorisés selon l'espace social transnational unique de chaque groupe.

Il existe de nombreuses réponses rationalistes appartenant aux intérêts, besoins, attentes, inquiétudes et défis de ces individus/groupes/organisations de soutien - ce que cette étude appelle des interstices. Ces interstices peuvent apparaître pour n'importe quelle raison, comme le fait que la patrie ou le pays d'accueil connaissent des tensions avec diverses composantes politiques du

pays d'origine, une atmosphère de tension et de crise qui dure depuis des décennies, ou une situation politique du pays d'origine qui ne présente aucun équilibre. Pourtant, aussi nombreux qu'ils puissent être, certains interstices ont été observés plus souvent que d'autres. Et, plus intéressant encore, les types communs d'interstices ont été observés regroupés parmi les membres des mêmes constellations/groupes ethniques, de croyances et de syndicats qui appartiennent à un espace social transnational similaire. Pour clarifier, dans le cadre de cette étude, les diverses personnes originaires de Turquie et leurs descendants ont montré des intérêts similaires à ceux des autres membres de leur groupe qui partageaient leur espace social transnational et sont devenus des partisans/électeurs du HDP. Cela nous permet de classer ces personnes en fonction des associations dans lesquelles elles sont activement impliquées.

Je soutiens que ces associations ethniques/confessionnelles/politiques, pour la plupart indépendantes, ont d'autres interstices qui les ont amenées à générer un microcosme, qui a eu besoin d'un moment spécifique pour voir le jour. Je suggère que dans le domaine politique, il y avait un besoin parmi ces groupes qui était déjà ouvert à l'action/participation politique - dans ce cas, le besoin d'un parti politique nouvellement né qui activerait ces groupes en tant que composants d'un microcosme, formant une coalition ou une alliance communautaire multi-diaspora.

L'Allemagne et la France sont les deux principaux pays de résidence des citoyens turcs à l'étranger. En étant les premières nations vers lesquelles les ressortissants turcs ont souhaité migrer, même après le début des années 1960 lorsque le grand nombre de migrants est arrivé dans ces pays pour des raisons tant économiques que politiques. L'Allemagne et la France sont devenus, jusqu'à ce jour, les foyers de divers groupes diasporiques originaires de Turquie et ce, à chaque période de migration. Ces pays ont offert des circonstances démocratiquement plus libres qui ont permis l'élévation d'un nouveau parti politique, le HDP, par diverses communautés diasporiques d'origine réfugiée lorsque le droit de vote a été étendu aux citoyens hors du pays.

Il était important d'utiliser une méthode de recherche permettant de saisir les données narratives riches formées par les personnes interrogées. Les méthodes quantitatives n'auraient pas été en mesure de répondre aux questions de recherche de la thèse, qui s'intéressent principalement à la manière et aux raisons pour lesquelles les organisations de la diaspora se mobilisent pour un parti politique du pays d'origine et forment le parti à distance, sans l'implication directe du parti. La

nature exploratoire de ces questions caractérise cette recherche, et à ce titre, les méthodes qualitatives ont été considérées comme les plus appropriées. Ainsi, étant donné les objectifs de l'étude, les entretiens et l'observation participante étaient les méthodes de collecte de données nécessaires, complétées par l'exploration de la littérature existante, les analyses des résultats des élections, les programmes des partis les plus votés, les débats parlementaires et les motions qui ont eu lieu au parlement turc de 1987 à 2018 et une analyse de base des comptes de médias sociaux des partis politiques turcs et des comptes de ces partis politiques par les membres de la diaspora qui opèrent pour les électeurs non résidents.

L'étude de terrain principale s'appuie sur 61 entretiens, incluant des partisans à distance du HDP très actifs dans une organisation de la diaspora, des cadres du parti, des partisans à distance d'autres partis et des journalistes en Allemagne, en France et en Turquie. Les entretiens en Allemagne et en France on été menés principalement, mais pas exclusivement, dans les États de Rhénanie-du-Nord-Westphalie et de Hesse en Allemagne et dans les régions françaises de Grand Est et d'Île-de-France, dans le but d'accumuler des données présentant des différences, des points communs et des variations. Douze villes différentes ont été choisies, la plupart dans les districts mentionnés : Brême, Cologne, Düsseldorf, Essen, Francfort, Hambourg et Wuppertal en Allemagne, et Colmar, Metz, Mulhouse, Paris et Strasbourg en France. Cependant, les entretiens avec deux des cadres du parti ont eu lieu plusieurs fois à Istanbul entre 2015 et 2018.

J'ai également recueilli des données à partir d'observations participantes. Au total, j'ai observé et/ou pris part à 27 événements en rapport avec la mobilisation des groupes pro-HDP par le biais des associations de la diaspora et de ces associations dans les périodes sans élections. J'ai passé un temps considérable à chaque événement auquel j'ai participé, de quelques heures à 14 heures au maximum.

Se concentrer uniquement sur la période postérieure à 1987 (lorsque les citoyens non-résidents se sont vus accorder des droits de vote limités sur le territoire national) ou sur la période postérieure à 2012 (lorsque les citoyens expatriés se sont vus accorder le droit de vote à partir de leur pays de résidence) ne suffirait pas à comprendre le cas original incarné par les partisans du Parti démocratique des peuples en Allemagne et en France. Le cas turc montre que la tradition des partis politiques ottomans à travers le déclin de l'Empire ottoman, la loi sur les partis politiques et la loi électorale ont généré un pays gouverné avec un système de parti unique dominant, connu

sous le nom de système de parti prédominant. Cette circonstance unique s'est superposée à (ou a créé intentionnellement) la conjoncture mondiale qui a conduit à l'émancipation des ressortissants non-résidents. L'objectif de cette dissertation n'est pas de comprendre pourquoi le droit de vote de ces citoyens a été étendu. Il s'agit de comprendre pourquoi et comment les ressortissants étrangers s'organisent politiquement et se mobilisent pour les partis politiques de leur pays d'origine à travers les élections des pays d'origine. Par conséquent, plutôt que de construire une théorie en se concentrant sur le cas et en l'expliquant dans ses limites, il est nécessaire d'analyser les preuves avec l'explication causale de ce cas à l'aide de la méthodologie de traçage de processus. L'histoire des partis politiques, les modifications de la loi sur les partis politiques et de la loi électorale, la mise en œuvre de ces lois par les partis au pouvoir et la non-inclusion des groupes minoritaires par les principaux partis politiques revêtent une importance particulière. Par conséquent, ces concepts nécessitent une évaluation détaillée afin de mieux comprendre et analyser le mécanisme causal qui a construit les bases de l'incitation/motivation des expatriés pour un petit parti politique de la patrie, relativement marginalisé et ethnicisé, le HDP.

Les spécialistes du Moyen-Orient qui s'intéressent à la Turquie se préoccupent depuis longtemps des modes de vote et de représentation ethnicisés et sectarisés des Kurdes, des Alévis ou d'autres groupes ethniques et religieux minoritaires en Turquie. Cependant, les premiers récits de l'histoire politique turque montrent que les partis qui avaient la chance d'avoir un siège au parlement, même s'ils comptaient des membres issus de minorités, n'avaient pas pour objectif de représenter ces groupes minoritaires. En d'autres termes, les partis politiques turcs traditionnels comptaient des membres de minorités ethniques et religieuses avant et pendant leur formation, mais ces membres appartenant à des groupes minoritaires ne bénéficiaient d'aucune représentation descriptive. En fait, ces membres étaient découragés de montrer publiquement leur appartenance à une minorité et on attendait d'eux qu'ils se comportent comme des Turcs, plus encore que les parlementaires turcs. Au lieu de cela, les partis politiques turcs étaient, et sont toujours, fortement construits en fonction des idéologies politiques qu'ils saisissent (social-démocrate, droite conservatrice et nationaliste).

Dans cette thèse, j'ai présenté que la combinaison du secret de la Société ottomane du Sacrifice de Soi et de son interdiction, suivie par le règne d'un parti unique (le Parti républicain du peuple

(CHP)) pendant des décennies et le traitement injuste du Parti démocrate (DP) pendant la première phase du régime multipartite, présentent des ressemblances avec le système de partis d'aujourd'hui et illustrent comment la règle de droit peut être utilisée en faveur du parti au pouvoir tout en opprimant l'opposition.

En outre, d'après la chronologie que j'ai saisie (jusqu'en 1961), l'absence d'une loi spécifique sur les partis politiques n'a pas nécessairement eu pour effet de faciliter les interdictions de partis. Au contraire, les partis autoritaires de Turquie (ou ceux qui sont devenus autoritaires après leurs victoires écrasantes), ou le régime militaire avec les réformes législatives sur le système électoral et la législation sur les partis, ont systématiquement facilité l'interdiction des partis et le succès électoral des petits partis.

L'évolution des partis politiques turcs a produit deux types de culture politique. Le premier correspond aux partis au pouvoir, ces partis essaient d'éliminer tout challenger. Le second correspond aux challengers qui tentent de survivre et de s'adapter dans certaines limites.

Au fil des décennies, la Turquie est devenue le théâtre de nombreuses modifications de ses systèmes de partis et d'élections, malgré son histoire de démocratisation relativement jeune, qui a commencé en pratique avec l'ère du multipartisme. La Turquie a connu des niveaux historiquement élevés de disproportionnalité dans la manière dont les votes sont reflétés dans les sièges parlementaires, le système électoral ne s'adaptant pas à la demande des électeurs de soutenir de plus en plus de partis au fil du temps. La Turquie, notamment avec le début de l'ère du multipartisme, a connu de nombreux changements dans son système électoral. Néanmoins, jusqu'à ce jour, les réglementations relatives aux partis et aux élections ont prouvé que ces changements n'ont fait que renforcer le système de partis prédominant. Cette situation a tout d'abord restreint la marge de manœuvre des partis d'opposition pour se représenter au parlement de manière proportionnelle. Deuxièmement, elle a permis au parti au pouvoir de devenir autoritaire en contrôlant directement les médias, la bureaucratie et le système judiciaire, en exploitant les ressources publiques et en opprimant les partis d'opposition.

Cependant, le plus grand défi auquel les partis politiques ont commencé à faire face jusqu'à ce jour, en particulier les petits partis et les partis d'opposition, est apparu avec la Constitution de 1982. Cette constitution a introduit la combinaison de la formule d'Hondt et du seuil de 10 % à partir des élections de 1983. En plus de l'expérience déjà contestée de la Turquie en matière

d'élections libres et équitables, la formule de représentation d'Hondt, avec le seuil de 10 % ajouté au calcul, s'est avérée causer encore moins de proportion dans la représentation.

Ce système a désavantagé les petits partis comme le Parti de la démocratie du peuple (HADEP) et le Parti démocratique du peuple (DEHAP), qui ont obtenu un soutien régional important, comme lors des élections de 1999 et 2002, ou même les grands partis plus établis comme le CHP et le Parti de la mère patrie (ANAP) lors des élections de 1997, qui ont obtenu des niveaux de soutien appréciables dans l'ensemble du pays, mais n'ont pas pu dépasser le seuil national et n'ont donc pas été représentés au parlement. Compte tenu de la possibilité très improbable d'entrer au Parlement en dépassant le seuil, les petits partis ont trouvé d'autres moyens d'entrer au Parlement.

Il existe un lien étroit entre la législation et les échappatoires que les minorités, les petits partis ou les nouveaux partis trouvent pour obtenir une représentation politique. La possibilité restreinte d'entrée et de succès électoraux pour ces partis est due aux changements législatifs, principalement les interdictions de partis facilement applicables. La barrière électorale nationale n'offre que peu ou pas d'espace aux petits partis et aux nouveaux partis. Cette situation a poussé les petites organisations politiques à trouver des moyens alternatifs, dans le cadre de la législation sur les élections et les partis politiques, pour représenter leurs partisans dans les institutions politiques : former des alliances électorales informelles et présenter des candidats en tant qu'indépendants afin de contourner le seuil national de 10%. Ces deux stratégies des petits partis qui n'auraient probablement pas eu assez de soutien pour dépasser le seuil ont permis à ces partis d'obtenir des sièges au parlement et, par conséquent, de contribuer à réduire la disproportionnalité de la représentation. Néanmoins, aucune de ces solutions n'offre une solution durable, laissant la discrimination contre les petits partis en vigueur jusqu'à ce jour.

Les développements antidémocratiques des années 1980 ont offert aux groupes d'opposition des possibilités plus limitées de s'épanouir sur la scène politique turque. Néanmoins, cette décennie a également vu les premiers pas vers la reconnaissance des citoyens non-résidents en tant qu'électeurs, même si c'était plus symbolique. Par nature, l'extension du droit de vote aux électeurs non résidents peut être considérée comme une mesure démocratique ; toutefois, étant donné la suppression politique directe ou indirecte dont ont fait l'objet les électeurs du pays

d'origine, interpréter la reconnaissance des citoyens non résidents en tant qu'électeurs comme un pas vers la démocratisation ne serait guère une perspective réaliste.

La méthode consistant à voter aux postes frontières offerte aux citoyens turcs non résidents entre 1987 et 2011 n'était pas pratique et n'était pas réaliste, compte tenu des faibles taux de participation enregistrés lors de sept élections qui se sont étalées sur deux décennies. Par conséquent, à cet égard, permettre aux électeurs non-résidents de participer aux élections du pays d'origine depuis leur pays de résidence, ce qui, en peu de temps, a fait passer le taux de participation de 5 % à plus de 50 %, peut être considéré comme une tentative plus efficace et plus positive d'inclure de manière réaliste les électeurs éligibles non-résidents dans le processus électoral du pays d'origine.

La préoccupation des partis d'opposition et des groupes non partisans concernant le vote des émigrés a commencé lorsque les caractéristiques techniques de la procédure de vote ont montré un manque évident de transparence, remontant à 1987 avec les techniques de comptage des bulletins. Les problèmes les plus courants, outre le décompte des voix, concernent la sécurité des bulletins de vote, qui était entre les mains des unités satellites de l'AKP ; à ce jour, les procédures restent grossières et suscitent un certain nombre de questions soulevées dans le monde entier.

Néanmoins, les questions problématiques soulevées à l'encontre des procédures de vote, bien qu'elles n'aient pas été résolues, n'ont pas affecté le taux de participation aux élections suivantes, du moins jusqu'à ce jour. Le cas portugais montre pourtant que plusieurs cas de pratiques illégales lors de l'élection législative de 1976 se sont reflétés dans les urnes lors de l'élection suivante. La participation des émigrés portugais est alors tombée à 26,5 % en 1982, contre 82 % en 1976. Pour ce qui est de la Turquie cependant, le taux de participation des émigrés turcs est passé de 8,37 % en 2014 à 32,5 % en juin 2015 et 44,7 en 2018. Cependant, le taux de participation élevé est dans la culture politique des citoyens turcs, et n'est propre ni aux citoyens éligibles non-résidents ni à une période spécifique dans le temps. Bien que chacune des élections qui ont eu lieu en Turquie ait connu des cas de fraude électorale, la participation électorale turque est restée plus élevée que dans de nombreux pays européens, avec une moyenne de 76 % pour la période 1950-1980.

En raison du manque d'études empiriques, les raisons de la variation des taux de participation des ressortissants dans les districts extraterritoriaux n'ont pas encore été clarifiées. Toutefois, les

travaux actuels indiquent que dans le cas de la Turquie, les taux de participation plus élevés ne sont pas nécessairement dus aux mécanismes d'enregistrement réformés, mais à l'impact des acteurs politiques et de la société civile sur la mobilisation des électeurs dans les pays de destination, qui est, comme indiqué, fortement liée aux citoyens déjà engagés. En outre, avec le succès du HDP pro-kurde en termes de partage des voix, nous observons que les ressortissants à l'étranger qui ont voté étaient également proportionnellement plus favorables aux petits partis par rapport aux votes exprimés dans le pays, ce qui constitue à lui seul un cas crédible pour démontrer l'impact ainsi que l'importance de la base de la diaspora, qu'elle soit initiée par la société politique ou civile.

Les changements intervenus sous le règne de l'AKP ont entraîné, à l'instar des partis CHP et DP qui ont détenu le pouvoir, respectivement entre 1920 et le milieu des années 1940 et du milieu des années 1940 au début des années 1960, un effacement de la ligne de démarcation entre le parti et l'État, où les médias, la bureaucratie et le système judiciaire étaient largement contrôlés, les ressources publiques exploitées et les partis d'opposition sévèrement opprimés. Ainsi, le lancement par l'AKP de l'établissement de ses satellites à l'étranger (par exemple, l'Union turque islamique des affaires théologiques, connue sous le nom de DITIB, et l'Union des Européens Turcs Démocrates, connue sous le nom d'UID) une décennie avant de permettre le vote à l'extérieur, et l'ignorance du parti dans la recherche de solutions aux problèmes soulevés par des élections libres et équitables et la transparence sur les questions de sécurité des bulletins de vote, n'étaient ni surprenants ni inattendus.

D'autre part, les partis d'opposition, en particulier les petits, comme cela a été souligné dans la première partie de l'étude, ont toujours eu des difficultés à s'adapter et à survivre sur la scène politique turque. Le succès électoral du HDP à l'étranger en tant que parti multiethnique et multireligieux montre que de tels partis peuvent être moins désavantagés dans la compétition électorale à l'étranger qu'à l'intérieur du pays.

Les organisations diasporiques dans les pays de destination des citoyens turcs, tout comme les organisations appartenant à d'autres communautés diasporiques dans le monde, servent principalement de filets de sécurité pour les diasporas de Turquie. En outre, elles servent d'organisations intermédiaires entre les individus ou avec l'État et jouent un rôle essentiel dans la construction de l'identité diasporique ou dans la satisfaction des besoins prioritaires des

diasporas. Divers types de diasporas sont caractérisées des inégalités dans leur structure organisationnelle. Comme dans le cas des diasporas turques, la forme unique d'une organisation de diaspora dans un pays de destination change, s'élargit ou fusionne avec les organisations des autres diasporas pour diverses raisons. Dans les cas où l'afflux de migrants est continu du même pays d'origine vers le même pays de destination la migration circulaire devient une partie du style de vie des émigrants dans les pays de destination. La complexité accrue entre les organisations diasporiques perdure pendant des générations, ce qui invalide dans une large mesure la signification de la différenciation générationnelle. Par conséquent, malgré la complexité de la catégorisation des organisations de diasporas, il est essentiel d'examiner le dynamisme avec lequel ces organisations évoluent dans le temps.

Il existe de nombreuses études sur la migration turque vers l'Europe. Et ces études, y compris les plus récentes, mentionnent les phases de l'émigration turque et fournissent des informations allant des canaux utilisés initialement pour émigrer au nombre d'anciens citoyens turcs naturalisés par an, afin de comprendre et de classer comment les diasporas diffèrent les unes des autres. Cette approche de catégorisation de l'émigration turque est sans aucun doute très importante pour améliorer notre compréhension du "pourquoi" et du "comment" de l'émigration turque et de son évolution. Néanmoins, cette approche est également trompeuse, car les exceptions à ces catégories sont nombreuses. Par exemple, plus d'un cas que j'ai rencontré au cours de mon travail de terrain a confirmé que, indépendamment de leur origine ethnique, certains migrants d'origine turque - et on pense que leur nombre s'élève à des milliers - ont fait usage de la "carte kurde" et ont émigré en tant que réfugiés politiques alors qu'en réalité, ils étaient des migrants économiques qui avaient trop tardé à faire partie du programme de travailleurs invités qui a été interrompu en 1973.

En outre, en ce qui concerne les "Turcs naturalisés", un rapport récent de l'Allemagne a révélé qu'il y aurait environ un million d'anciens citoyens turcs qui ont contourné la loi allemande interdisant la double nationalité en récupérant leur nationalité turque après avoir obtenu la nationalité allemande. Par conséquent, la plupart des études disponibles sur le sujet, en raison de la non-disponibilité des données pertinentes auprès des canaux officiels turcs, obtiennent leurs données des sources officielles des pays d'accueil, qui ne parviennent pas à saisir la réalité du statut de citoyenneté d'un certain nombre de ressortissants naturalisés. Dans ces circonstances, il

est difficile de se fier aux données accessibles qui représentent de manière douteuse le nombre substantiel de ressortissants ou d'anciens ressortissants turcs et qui reposent uniquement sur les vagues de migration. Les chiffres relèvent des différentes motivations (économique, regroupement familial et politique) qui sont toujours supposées être les principaux déterminants de la variation entre les diasporas. À cet égard, les réseaux de diasporas sont généralement considérés comme les éléments les plus plausibles pour décrire les communautés de migrants dans les pays d'accueil.

Le champ de cette étude est constitué de groupes mixtes en termes de critères nationaux (citoyens turcs, anciens citoyens turcs et leurs descendants), de groupes ethniques (Turcs, Kurdes, Yezidis, Assyriens, Arméniens, etc.), de groupes religieux (Sunnites, Alévis, etc.), de régions d'origine (allant jusqu'aux villages d'où proviennent les migrants) et d'orientation politique (gauche, droite, nationaliste, etc.). Cette situation montre que chaque critère relève de l'identité d'un individu et démontre la difficulté d'étudier la mobilisation des migrants à travers des groupements à petite échelle. Par conséquent, les organisations de migrants apparaissent comme l'analyse la plus appropriée pour cette recherche. En outre, l'étude des organisations de migrants, où les diasporas voient le jour, offre une occasion unique d'examiner les changements rapides dans la formation des réseaux et des espaces sociaux transnationaux, ainsi que les motivations des membres de la diaspora lors d'un événement qui change la donne, comme l'émancipation des électeurs non résidents, qu'ils soient originaires du pays d'origine, du pays d'accueil ou des deux.

Les immigrés originaires de Turquie en Allemagne et en France ont un profil démographique similaire. Principalement en raison de la proximité des deux pays, les vagues migratoires en provenance de Turquie ont entraîné, dans l'ensemble, des profils démographiques similaires à ceux des groupes cibles de cette recherche ; par conséquent, ces groupes présentent plus de similitudes que de différences. Les variables communes à l'Allemagne et à la France se limitent aux origines historiques des diasporas originaires de Turquie et à la similitude des approches démocratiques et des positions économiques de ces pays , tandis qu'il existe de nettes distinctions dans la perspective des migrants ainsi que dans les politiques d'acquisition de la citoyenneté par le biais du *jus sanguinus* conditionnel et de la promulgation de la double citoyenneté, mais la réponse des immigrants est relativement parallèle.

Malgré les différences d'approche de ces États sur les questions de migration et de citoyenneté, les migrants de première génération, en particulier, ne choisissent pas nécessairement de se faire naturaliser en Allemagne. Dans le cas de la France, où la double nationalité est possible, ils sont susceptibles d'obtenir la nationalité française en plus de la nationalité turque. Les descendants d'immigrés économiques d'origine turque en France, comme cela va de pair avec la double nationalité, sont les plus nombreux parmi les populations migrantes à obtenir la nationalité de leurs parents. Cette situation souligne que, pour de nombreux citoyens turcs qui acquièrent un passeport supplémentaire - en l'occurrence le passeport français -, celui-ci a davantage une signification pratique qui pourrait également être interprétée, dans le cas des descendants de migrants, comme la force de l'attachement à la nationalité des parents. Cela pourrait également être interprété comme le fait que, pour les citoyens naturalisés, le passeport n'est rien d'autre qu'une preuve matérielle et symbolique de l'appartenance à l'État-nation. Par conséquent, il ne serait pas faux de prétendre que le statut de citoyen de ces groupes ne signifie pas nécessairement qu'ils se sentent plus allemands ou français, ou qu'il découle principalement du fait qu'ils sont considérés comme exclus de l'identité nationale-ethno-culturelle allemande ou français par le biais de catégories statistiques telles que "d'origine immigrée" en Allemagne.

Les réfugiés de Turquie et d'ailleurs se distinguent des populations issues de l'immigration économique par leur réaction aux lois sur la nationalité, non seulement en raison des exigences du droit d'asile, mais aussi parce qu'ils se sentent déjà étrangers à la Turquie. Ces personnes préfèrent ou sont obligées de choisir l'une des citoyennetés et de se naturaliser. Cependant, leurs liens avec leur pays d'origine persistent, même sur plusieurs générations. Pourtant, en ce qui concerne le sentiment d'appartenance ou l'intérêt pour le pays d'origine, les diasporas de réfugiés sont dans une situation similaire aux migrants économiques.

L'obtention ou non de la citoyenneté du pays d'accueil ne devrait pas avoir d'incidence sur la force des liens des migrants/réfugiés d'origine turque et de leurs descendants avec la Turquie ou le Kurdistan turc. Selon les chercheurs, la transmission intergénérationnelle des activités politiques et linguistiques ne cesse pas ; au contraire, étant donné que les pays d'accueil sont des nations démocratiquement plus établies, les réfugiés trouvent davantage d'occasions de participer et de générer davantage pour leur patrie au niveau transnational. Cette situation est également valable pour les organisations de la diaspora d'origine turque et trouve un écho dans leur fort

engagement sur la scène politique turque ainsi que dans leur réponse aux partis du pays d'origine dans les deux cas.

Dans le sillage des accords bilatéraux sur la main-d'œuvre invitée, en commençant par l'Allemagne en 1961, les émigrants originaires de Turquie qui étaient des Turcs et des Kurdes de souche ont commencé à affluer régulièrement vers l'Europe. Le flux d'émigrants originaires de Turquie vers l'Europe a également connu des trajectoires et des orientations différentes selon le parti turc au pouvoir, en particulier après les années 1980. Cependant, au début des années 1960, à l'instar des migrants à vocation économique d'autres pays qui ont signé des accords bilatéraux avec l'Allemagne, ces premiers migrants turcs ont rejoint les syndicats. Dans ces organisations, jusqu'à l'arrivée des groupes politiquement marginalisés qui a débuté dans les années 1980, la famille, les amis, les proches et les membres des communautés ethniques et religieuses ont joué un rôle important pour établir la confiance. Les diasporas d'origine turque qui se sont installées en Allemagne et en France, d'abord (notamment) par le biais du recrutement de main-d'œuvre et du regroupement familial, puis par le biais de la demande d'asile et du recrutement de main-d'œuvre hautement qualifiée. Ces groupes ont ensuite constitué des organisations de migrants formées par des liens interpersonnels, notamment avec les vagues migratoires supplémentaires qui étaient motivées par des raisons politiques, et la politique étrangère turque a commencé à être plus influente, notamment les instruments étatiques tels que le DITIB).

La littérature établit un lien entre le transnationalisme politique et les organisations diasporique ; les organisations diasporiques sont évaluées par le biais des espaces sociaux transnationaux créés par les réseaux de migrants, en termes de conformité ou d'antagonisme avec le pays d'origine ou avec d'autres organisations de diaspora. Cette situation n'est pas différente en ce qui concerne les groupes d'origine turque. Même si la Cour constitutionnelle turque a interdit l'établissement de missions de partis turcs à l'étranger jusqu'aux amendements de 1987, dès les années 1970, il était déjà possible d'observer le soutien informel des organisations de la diaspora aux partis politiques turcs ou leur affiliation à ceux-ci. Cela a été particulièrement vrai après que le début de la vague de migration à motivation politique a donné de nouveaux niveaux de variation aux organisations de la diaspora qui se sont centrées pour ou contre le gouvernement turc et ont augmenté en nombre. Le nombre accru de groupes ethniques et religieux et d'opinions politiques opposées au sein de la diaspora a renforcé la corrélation entre la position politique de la diaspora et l'agitation

politique de la Turquie. Cette situation a entraîné le renforcement de l'encadrement étatique de la diaspora par le gouvernement turc et l'attention accrue portée à la politique étrangère. Néanmoins, depuis les premières mesures ressemblant à un vote externe pour la diaspora turque en 1987, au cours desquelles les citoyens non résidents pouvaient voter aux postes frontières, les électeurs de la diaspora ont favorisé les partis conservateurs (par exemple, le Parti du bien-être aux élections de 1991) plus que ceux qui étaient au pouvoir, jusqu'à ce que les partis conservateurs deviennent ceux qui détiennent le pouvoir à la Grande Assemblée nationale turque.

Nous avons observé les organisations diasporiques qui ont été analysées de manière approfondie pour leurs engagements dans les trajectoires des partis politiques du pays d'origine, qui se sont combinés de manière exhaustive avec le vote externe après 2014. Dans la plupart des études sur les partis politiques qui se concentrent sur leur fonctionnement à l'étranger, les organisations de la diaspora sont considérées comme la cible des partis politiques du pays d'origine ; ici, une perspective de "path dependency" qui se limite à la portée extraterritoriale des partis du pays d'origine a également montré une cohérence avec les partis politiques turcs traditionnels et leurs satellites dans les cas nationaux.

L'effort officiel du HDP pour mobiliser les partisans vivant à l'étranger a été plutôt limité, surtout si on le compare à l'existence des autres partis d'origine turque établis dans la diaspora depuis des décennies. Tout au long du travail de terrain et de l'examen des sources primaires et secondaires, au niveau institutionnel, aucune raison n'est apparue comme un facteur de motivation pour les institutions qui sont devenues les alliées du parti.

Il est difficile d'identifier et de compter le nombre d'organisations originaires de Turquie qui ont montré un soutien institutionnel au HDP depuis que le vote externe a été activé pour les citoyens turcs ; compte tenu des limites de cette étude, à l'aide de deux critères, on peut réduire le champ à trois types d'organisations. Comme mentionné à plusieurs reprises précédemment, le premier critère est (a) les organisations de la diaspora doivent avoir eu une position politique favorable au HDP tout au long des périodes électorales turques des élections de juin et novembre 2015. Le deuxième critère (b) couvre les organisations ayant des degrés différents de soutien à ce parti. Cette analyse se concentre uniquement sur trois grands groupes de soutien couvrant la plupart des principales organisations de la diaspora qui ont été particulièrement importantes tout au long

des élections de juin et de novembre 2015 et qui se sont avérées être des partisans du HDP : (1) les organisations véridiques, (2) les organisations situationnelles et (3) les organisations précaires.

D'après les cas nationaux de l'Allemagne et de la France, les organisations de la diaspora originaires de Turquie ont dominé les réseaux sociaux des groupes de migrants qui composent ces organisations dans ces pays aujourd'hui. Depuis l'Allemagne et la France, nous avons également observé comment ces organisations ont modifié ou adapté leurs structures organisationnelles dans les partis politiques turcs et leurs mobilisations lors des élections turques. Par conséquent, même s'il est difficile de nommer et de compter le nombre de ces organisations originaires de Turquie, les organisations satellites des principaux partis turcs et les organisations de l'alliance du HDP ont été soulignées avec une plus grande attention à ce dernier groupe pour servir l'objectif de l'étude. Pour ce faire, cette thèse a exploré les trois formes les plus répandues - pôle religieux, pôle politique et pôle ethnique et culturel - des organisations de la diaspora d'origine turque en Allemagne et en France, dont certaines pourraient être énumérées: le HDF (plus tard CHP) Berlin Union pour le CHP et le DIDF pour le HDP sont des exemples de syndicats de travailleurs ; le DITIB pour l'AKP, et la Fédération des Alévis d'Allemagne (AABF) et la Fédération Union des Alévis en France (FUAF) pour le HDP représentent les organisations religieuses ; et les organisations ethniques sélectionnées sont la Fédération turque en Allemagne pour le Parti d'action nationaliste (MHP) et ensuite pour l'AKP, et la Fédération des associations kurdes en Allemagne (NAV-DEM) et le Conseil Démocratique kurde en France (CDK-F) pour le HDP.

Compte tenu de ce contexte, il est évident que le soutien dynamique des groupes d'origine turque avant le vote externe représentait déjà tout le spectre des partis politiques turcs en Allemagne et en France dès les années 1970. Par conséquent, cette section ne fait pas seulement la lumière sur les développements qui ont émergé à la suite de la reconnaissance de droits des électeurs non-résidents en 2012 au sein des capacités de ces organisations de la diaspora, mais nous informe également sur la manière dont les partis traditionnels et non conventionnels diffèrent dans de telles circonstances (vote externe). En d'autres termes, avec l'introduction du droit de vote externe, les organisations de la diaspora sont soit la cible des partis politiques du pays d'origine (ici, l'AKP, le MHP et le CHP), soit peuvent être considérées comme une alliance à distance

auto-motivée d'un parti politique du pays d'origine (ici, le HDP). À cette fin, on peut conclure que la littérature existante qui reconnaît les communautés de la diaspora comme les faire-valoir des partis politiques du pays d'origine, cette étude a montré à travers les alliances du HDP qu'elles pouvaient être des éléments importants de la mobilisation politique à l'étranger.

En outre, cette section a montré que l'émergence de ces associations de diasporas d'origine turque, largement marginalisées, indique également que l'Allemagne a joué un rôle de pionnier en tant que premier pays préféré d'un grand nombre de migrants turcs, ce qui n'a pas changé. Pourtant, la France joue un rôle essentiel pour les diasporas turques en tant que principal allié de l'Allemagne. Les alliances transfrontalières des organisations de migrants originaires de Turquie montrent également la transnationalité des organisations qui va au-delà de la connexion entre le pays d'origine (ici la Turquie) et le pays d'accueil (ici l'Allemagne ou la France), mais qui englobe plutôt plusieurs pays, ce qui a en retour un vaste effet, surtout lorsque le vote externe et la politisation de ces organisations sont pris en compte.

L'analyse des données qualitatives recueillies auprès des personnes interrogées qui se définissent comme des partisans du HDP en Allemagne et en France, a montré qu'au niveau individuel, les facteurs de motivation, qui peuvent être des intérêts, des besoins, des attentes, des inquiétudes et des défis (ce que cette étude appelle les interstices) sont plus nombreux, ce qui les conduit à générer un microcosme. Par conséquent, pour répondre à la question de savoir quand ces divers groupes composés d'individus très différents coïncideraient avec le soutien et la mobilisation pour un parti politique, je suggère qu'il y avait un besoin parmi ces groupes et ces individus dans le domaine politique qui était déjà ouvert pour une action/participation politique - dans ce cas, un parti politique nouvellement né - qui activerait ces groupes en tant que composantes, mais pas nécessairement engageantes, d'un microcosme, qui peut également être compris comme une coalition ou une formation d'alliance de la communauté multi-diaspora.

Pour comprendre la complexité des facteurs de motivation au niveau individuel pour la position pro-PDH des personnes non-résidentes, 62 entretiens approfondis analysés de manière thématique ont été évalués.

Le sujet du vote à l'étranger est de plus en plus discuté, mais il n'y a toujours pas eu d'étude approfondie sur l'évolution des campagnes et de la mobilisation des électeurs, ni sur la capacité de mobilisation des associations de migrants dans différents pays et contextes. Néanmoins, la

recherche empirique recueillie pour cette étude indique que les politiques de vote externe auxquelles sont soumis les ressortissants éligibles non résidents ont eu un impact sur les ressortissants à l'étranger de quatre façons essentielles :

(1) Il a été observé que la législation donnant le droit de vote aux citoyens éligibles dans le pays de résidence, tout en laissant les ressortissants non éligibles languir sans leur droit de vote, n'a pas pu empêcher les ressortissants non éligibles de devenir des supporters ou des partisans à distance. Tous les entretiens réalisés dans le cadre de cette étude ont montré que les personnes interrogées qui ont participé à la mobilisation du parti par des moyens électoraux et non électoraux en tant que partisans ont agi indépendamment de leur statut de citoyenneté. L'extension du droit de vote aux citoyens non-résidents ne signifie pas que cette nouvelle opportunité ne concerne que les citoyens. Cela ne signifie pas non plus que seuls les citoyens résidant à l'étranger prendront part au processus électoral de leur pays.

(2) L'analyse des données qualitatives recueillies auprès des personnes interrogées a montré qu'au niveau individuel, le HDP, en tant que parti politique, a attiré diverses personnes issues de milieux différents pour des raisons différentes qui sont décrites comme des interstices dans la manière dont elles ont formé le parti dans les pays étudiés, ce que cette étude appelle un microcosme. Comme on l'a observé, les personnes interrogées avaient différents niveaux de soutien électoral ou non électoral pour le parti qui variaient entre véritable, situationnel et précaire. Cependant, cette variété, comme on le voit, ne se limite pas à un seul raisonnement pour chaque participant. Chaque personne interrogée et chaque observation participante ont souligné que les interstices sont difficiles à compter et ne peuvent être réduits à quelques points. Par conséquent, je suggère qu'il y avait un besoin parmi ces groupes dans le domaine politique qui était déjà ouvert à l'action/participation politique - dans ce cas, un parti politique nouvellement né qui activerait ces groupes en tant que composants d'un microcosme (formation d'une coalition ou d'une alliance de communautés multi-diaspora), dépendant mais aussi indépendant les uns des autres. Au fur et à mesure que j'interrogeais les participants à différentes occasions, il m'est apparu clairement que de nombreuses personnes interrogées n'aimeraient pas partager un lieu commun avec les autres. Par exemple, parmi les partisans du CHP, qu'ils soient membres de l'AABF ou de la FUAF, il y avait une forte résistance à participer aux rassemblements du HDP où les slogans et les chants étaient en kurde.

(3) Les entretiens montrent également que, lorsque les individus font partie de la même organisation, le soutien institutionnel que ces organisations offrent en matière d'incitations a beaucoup en commun, ce qui a été présenté au niveau individuel de manière plus intense.

(4) Les entretiens ont également permis de comprendre que le HDP, en tant que parti politique national, a surmonté les difficultés du vote externe et a réussi à attirer des sympathisants, qui sont devenus des partisans à distance, par des moyens uniques qui n'étaient pas dirigés par les branches officielles du parti, mais par des individus qui se sont autoproclamés mobilisateurs du HDP. Les stratégies ne se limitaient pas aux canaux traditionnels, mais comprenaient également des moyens non traditionnels de faire campagne, tels que convaincre les gens en frappant à leur porte, encourager le partage des voix entre les membres éligibles, organiser des événements caritatifs, organiser des navettes pour transférer les personnes vers les bureaux de vote, etc. Ces moyens uniques sont apparus lors de l'examen des approches individuelles et organisationnelles hautement décentralisées pour générer la partisanerie et la mobilisation des électeurs.

Cette étude s'est principalement intéressée à la mobilisation des diasporas transnationales autour du vote à l'étranger et à l'implication des organisations de diasporas dans le processus électoral du pays d'origine. Cependant, en raison du manque d'études empiriques, les motifs de la participation des ressortissants dans les circonscriptions extraterritoriales restent à clarifier. C'est pourquoi nous avons examiné l'histoire des partis politiques turcs, le régime prédominant, la manière dont les petits partis luttent contre un certain nombre d'obstacles pour entrer au Parlement, et l'expérience de vote des Turcs à l'étranger afin de fournir une discussion plus explicite dans le cadre de cette étude.

Le cas de la Turquie montre une participation extraterritoriale relativement élevée par rapport à la majorité des nations qui ont étendu le droit de vote à leurs citoyens non-résidents, bien que la mise en œuvre des élections montre un déficit apparent en ce qui concerne les périodes électorales libres et équitables. Le grand intérêt des ressortissants turcs non résidents pour les élections turques ne découle pas nécessairement des mécanismes d'enregistrement réformés, mais plutôt de l'impact des acteurs politiques et de la société civile, qui ont encouragé la mobilisation des électeurs dans les pays de résidence. Avec le succès du vote extraterritorial du HDP pro-kurde, qui est plus élevé que le vote national, nous observons que les ressortissants turcs qui ont voté étaient aussi proportionnellement plus favorables aux petits partis par rapport

aux votes nationaux, ce qui constitue à lui seul un cas crédible pour démontrer l'impact et l'importance de la base de la diaspora, qu'elle soit politique ou de la société civile. Ces points font de l'expérience du vote externe turc un cas empirique significatif.

La principale question de recherche abordée dans cette étude de cas était la suivante : "Comment le vote externe, en tant que moment politique historique, conduit-il les organisations de la diaspora en faveur d'un parti politique du pays d'origine ?" Cette recherche a permis de constater que l'État politique du pays d'origine, qui façonne les organes législatifs, discrimine et opprime certaines populations ainsi que certains partis politiques au sein de ce pays, et lorsque cette situation est devenue l'une des raisons significatives de la migration vers certains pays dans lesquels les groupes de la diaspora deviennent importants (principalement en raison de la migration en chaîne), le "vote externe" émerge comme l'un des moyens par lesquels certains groupes de la diaspora, principalement les exilés, deviennent politiquement actifs pour un parti politique depuis leur pays de résidence.

Comme le parti politique en question, le HDP, au lendemain de sa fondation en 2011, a donné naissance à un paysage politique partisan très complexe en Allemagne et en France, diverses organisations/associations et individus migrants y ont pris part. Pourtant, les partisans du parti n'ont pas nécessairement fait preuve de solidarité ou d'interaction, ce qui rend le "soutien" de l'étranger au HDP pro-kurde complexe. Pour illustrer, le soutien ne provenait pas seulement des organisations kurdes qui étaient de véritables soutiens pour tout acteur politique kurde émergeant sur la scène politique turque ; il provenait également des organisations alévies qui sont prêtes à soutenir le parti pour les élections générales. De plus, il y avait un candidat alévi célèbre qui allait les représenter au parlement.

En outre, le soutien est également venu des sympathisants éloignés du CHP, qui souhaitent pour la plupart que le HDP passe le seuil pour renverser la règle du parti unique de l'AKP au parlement turc. En fait, ces organisations et bien d'autres ont agi de manière indépendante et, comme on pouvait s'y attendre, en s'appuyant principalement sur diverses motivations ne se limitant pas à celles mentionnées, ce qui les a amenés à exprimer leur soutien au HDP tout au long des élections générales turques. C'est pourquoi il ne serait pas faux de prétendre que toutes les organisations représentaient les pièces d'un microcosme.

Cette étude a également révélé que le soutien vibrant des groupes d'origine turque avant le vote externe représentait déjà l'ensemble des partis politiques turcs en Allemagne et en France dès les années 1970. Cette section a non seulement mis en lumière les développements qui ont émergé à la suite des droits accordés aux électeurs non-résidents en 2012 dans le cadre des capacités des organisations de la diaspora, mais elle nous a également montré comment les partis traditionnels et non conventionnels diffèrent dans de telles circonstances (vote externe). En d'autres termes, avec l'introduction du droit de vote externe, les organisations des diasporas sont devenues soit la cible des partis politiques du pays d'origine (ici, l'AKP, le MHP et le CHP), soit une alliance à distance auto-motivée d'un parti politique du pays d'origine (ici, le HDP). À cette fin, on peut conclure que la littérature disponible qui reconnaissait les communautés de la diaspora comme les faire-valoir des partis politiques du pays d'origine a montré, à travers les alliances du HDP, qu'elles pouvaient être des éléments importants de la mobilisation politique à l'étranger. Nous avons révélé que ces organisations, lorsqu'elles étaient des satellites coordonnés par leurs partis, le faisaient par le biais d'une stratégie de mobilisation comprenant, entre autres, la fourniture de navettes pour les électeurs, la prospection et l'organisation de rassemblements pour les élites du parti.

Cependant, comme l'indiquent les données empiriques, lorsque le parti n'a pas une formation décentralisée, comme dans le cas du HDP, il faut également comprendre que le HDP, en tant que parti politique du pays d'origine, a surmonté les difficultés du vote externe et a réussi à attirer des sympathisants et à les transformer en partisans. Ces partisans, en fonction des motivations qui les ont poussés à devenir des partisans du HDP au niveau institutionnel et individuel, peuvent être classés en trois groupes à l'aide d'une typologie que cette étude a générée de manière unique : véridique, situationnel et précaire. Ces partisans au niveau individuel (également appelés partisans à distance dans le cadre de cette étude) se sont attribués un rôle de mobilisateurs du HDP de manière unique.

Les stratégies de mobilisation des partisans ne se limitaient pas aux canaux traditionnels susmentionnés, mais comprenaient également des moyens non traditionnels de faire campagne, tels que convaincre les gens en frappant à la porte des électeurs, encourager le partage des voix entre les partis, organiser des événements caritatifs, organiser des navettes pour transférer les individus aux bureaux de vote, etc. en fonction du niveau de soutien que chaque institution et

chaque individu préférait. Ces méthodes uniques sont apparues lorsqu'on s'est penché sur le niveau individuel, qui était très décentralisé.

En outre, l'étude a également montré que depuis les premières décennies de l'émergence des associations de diasporas d'origine turque, largement marginalisées, le rôle pionnier de l'Allemagne en tant que premier pays de destination des grandes masses turques n'a pas changé à ce jour. Pourtant, la France était et reste un pays important pour l'épanouissement des diasporas turques et joue un rôle essentiel pour les diasporas turques en tant qu'allié le plus important de l'Allemagne. Les alliances transfrontalières des organisations de migrants originaires de Turquie montrent également la transnationalité des organisations, qui va au-delà du lien entre le pays d'origine (ici la Turquie) et le pays d'accueil (ici l'Allemagne ou la France), mais s'étend plutôt à de multiples pays, ce qui a en retour un vaste effet, surtout si l'on considère le vote externe et la politisation de ces organisations.

Je soutiens que dans les recherches sur les partis politiques et le vote à l'étranger, il y a une perspective de "path dependency" qui se limite à la portée des partis du pays d'origine à l'étranger, et avec cette recherche, je souligne qu'il est nécessaire de reconnaître que les organisations de la diaspora ne peuvent pas être considérées comme uniquement dirigées par un parti politique du pays d'origine dans leur fonctionnement. Dans la plupart des études sur les partis politiques qui se concentrent sur leur fonctionnement à l'étranger, les "organisations de la diaspora" sont considérées comme la cible des partis politiques du pays d'origine, ce qui écarte la possibilité que certains migrants et réfugiés de leurs pays respectifs puissent être des bâtisseurs enthousiastes d'espaces transnationaux qui leur sont propres et qui sont hautement politiques. En outre, les nouveaux débats scientifiques qui relient les associations de migrants aux partis du pays d'origine prennent en considération les organisations de migrants comme unité d'analyse. Pourtant, bien que des études souvent citées reconnaissent la force politique des pratiques politiques transnationales des migrants et des réfugiés en tant que réseaux importants, des décennies après cette reconnaissance, les organisations de la diaspora ne sont toujours pas créditées comme source de la mobilisation politique elle-même dans la littérature sur le vote externe, qui, bien qu'en croissance rapide ces dernières années, reste limitée.

Contrairement aux études qui mettent souvent l'accent sur l'influence des partis des pays d'origine sur les organisations de la diaspora, j'ai franchi un pas supplémentaire en me fondant

sur les résultats de cette recherche qui met l'accent sur le rôle de ces organisations sur les partis du pays d'origine. L'approche unilatérale consistant à se concentrer uniquement sur les organisations de la diaspora ne tient pas compte du fait que les organisations dotées d'une structure autonome ou d'une nature indépendante, et/ou ayant leur propre volonté, sont susceptibles de développer un intérêt pour les partis politiques du pays d'origine et de se mobiliser pour eux. Seule une poignée d'études, dont la mienne, ont reconnu une telle distinction, ce qui nécessite une étude plus approfondie, notamment en ce qui concerne les diasporas à motivation politique et leur participation à la politique du pays d'origine par le biais des partis politiques nationaux. Le fait d'en savoir plus sur la façon dont les organisations de la diaspora s'impliquent ou suscitent une mobilisation en faveur d'un parti politique du pays d'origine tout au long de la période électorale du pays d'origine dans les pays de résidence, et sur les raisons de cette implication, pourrait contribuer de manière significative aux connaissances dans lesquelles les études sur la diaspora et les études sur le vote externe se recoupent.

Dans le chapitre empirique, il a été observé que la législation donne le droit de vote aux citoyens éligibles dans le pays de résidence, tout en laissant les ressortissants non éligibles languir sans leur droit de vote, mais qu'elle n'a pas la capacité d'empêcher les ressortissants non éligibles de devenir des supporters ou des partisans à distance. Tous les entretiens menés dans le cadre de cette étude ont montré que les personnes interrogées qui ont participé à la mobilisation du parti en tant que partisans par des moyens électoraux et non électoraux ont agi indépendamment de leur statut de citoyenneté. L'extension du droit de vote aux citoyens non-résidents ne signifie pas que cette nouvelle opportunité ne concerne que les citoyens. Cela ne signifie pas non plus que seuls les citoyens résidant à l'étranger prendront part au processus électoral de leur pays.

Cette étude contribue aux études sur le vote externe en analysant la mobilisation des diasporas transnationales au niveau institutionnel et individuel dans le domaine du vote externe. Ce faisant, cette recherche fait progresser la compréhension du vote externe, auparavant limité aux électeurs éligibles, en fournissant des preuves empiriques qui soulignent les possibilités d'engagement non électoral qui émergent du vote externe et qui n'excluent pas les non-votants. Par conséquent, il est nécessaire de réanalyser et de redéfinir le vote externe, principalement en fonction de la façon dont les campagnes et la mobilisation des électeurs ont évolué dans différents pays et contextes,

et d'étendre leur portée. Par conséquent, l'étendue du vote externe ne peut se limiter aux groupes de la diaspora qui sont des électeurs éligibles.

Par conséquent, lorsqu'il s'agit de la pratique, la compréhension commune réduite du vote externe néglige les groupes de la diaspora non votants dans les pays d'accueil, ce qui crée la nécessité d'adopter une autre approche qui serait plus inclusive. Ainsi, la version étendue de la compréhension du vote externe a été adoptée tout au long de cette étude, incluant les partisans non votants.

L'analyse des données qualitatives recueillies lors des entretiens avec les partisans du HDP a montré qu'au niveau individuel, le HDP, en tant que parti politique, a attiré diverses personnes issues de différents milieux pour différentes raisons qui sont décrites comme des interstices dans la manière dont elles ont formé le parti dans les cas nationaux, ce que cette étude appelle un microcosme. Dans cette étude, j'ai montré la nécessité d'une catégorie plus large qui saisit la formation des différentes communautés des diasporas à la suite de certains événements historiques spécifiques (ici, le vote externe) qui les conduiraient dans la même direction et créeraient un microcosme - pas nécessairement pour le générer en tant qu'alliés mais pour en faire partie. Par conséquent, bien que je reconnaisse l'existence de la mobilisation des diasporas, j'ai également montré dans cette étude que la mobilisation des diasporas pour la même cause mais indépendamment les unes des autres existe et qu'il s'agit d'un phénomène qui n'a pas encore reçu l'attention qu'il mérite.

Comme nous l'avons dit, les personnes interrogées avaient différents niveaux de soutien au parti qui variaient entre véritable, situationnel et précaire. Cependant, cette variété, comme on le voit, ne se limite pas à un seul raisonnement pour chaque participant. Chaque personne interrogée et chaque observation participante ont souligné que les interstices sont difficiles à compter et ne peuvent être réduits à quelques points. Par conséquent, je suggère qu'il y avait un besoin parmi ces groupes dans le domaine politique qui était déjà ouvert à l'action/participation politique - dans ce cas, un parti politique nouvellement né qui activerait ces groupes en tant que composants d'un microcosme (formation d'une coalition ou d'une alliance de communautés multi-diaspora), dépendant mais aussi indépendant les uns des autres. En d'autres termes, les partisans du HDP représentent un microcosme marqué par les différents interstices qui existaient dans la diaspora

au sens large et qui auraient déjà pu être catégorisés selon l'espace social transnational unique de chaque groupe.

Au fur et à mesure que j'interrogeais les participants à différentes occasions, il était également clair que de nombreuses personnes interrogées n'aimaient pas partager un lieu commun avec les autres. Par exemple, les partisans du CHP, qu'ils soient membres de l'AABF ou de la FUAF, étaient très réticents à participer aux rassemblements du HDP où les slogans et les chants étaient en kurde. En outre, les entretiens montrent également que, lorsque les individus font partie de la même organisation, le soutien institutionnel que ces organisations offrent en matière d'incitations a beaucoup en commun, ce qui a été présenté au niveau individuel de manière plus intense.

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Samples

Sample 1. Allocated valid external votes, Electoral district of Malatya for HDP and AKP (November 2015 elections)

Electoral District	Valid Domestic Votes	Valid External Votes	Total Valid Votes	Valid Domestic Votes	Valid External Votes	Total Valid Votes	Valid Domestic Votes	Valid External Votes	Total Valid Votes
				HDP	HDP	HDP	AKP	AKP	AKP
Malatya	455,484	12,572	468,056	25,584	2,288	27,872	309,173	7,069	316,242
Total	46,555,267	1,284,964	47,840,231	4,914,203	233,882	5,148,085	22,959,394	722,532	23,681,926

Sources: Compiled by author using YSK (2020)

Sample 2. Number of casted votes before and after the regulation enabling voting at any extraterritorial mission

Elections	Number of Voters (registered / *voted*)			
	Belgium	**Germany**	**France**	**Luxembourg**
2015 General	56,113	575,587	142,988	-
2017 Referendum	73,027	660,666	142,776	571 / ***9,629***

Source: Compiled by author using YSK (2020)

Images
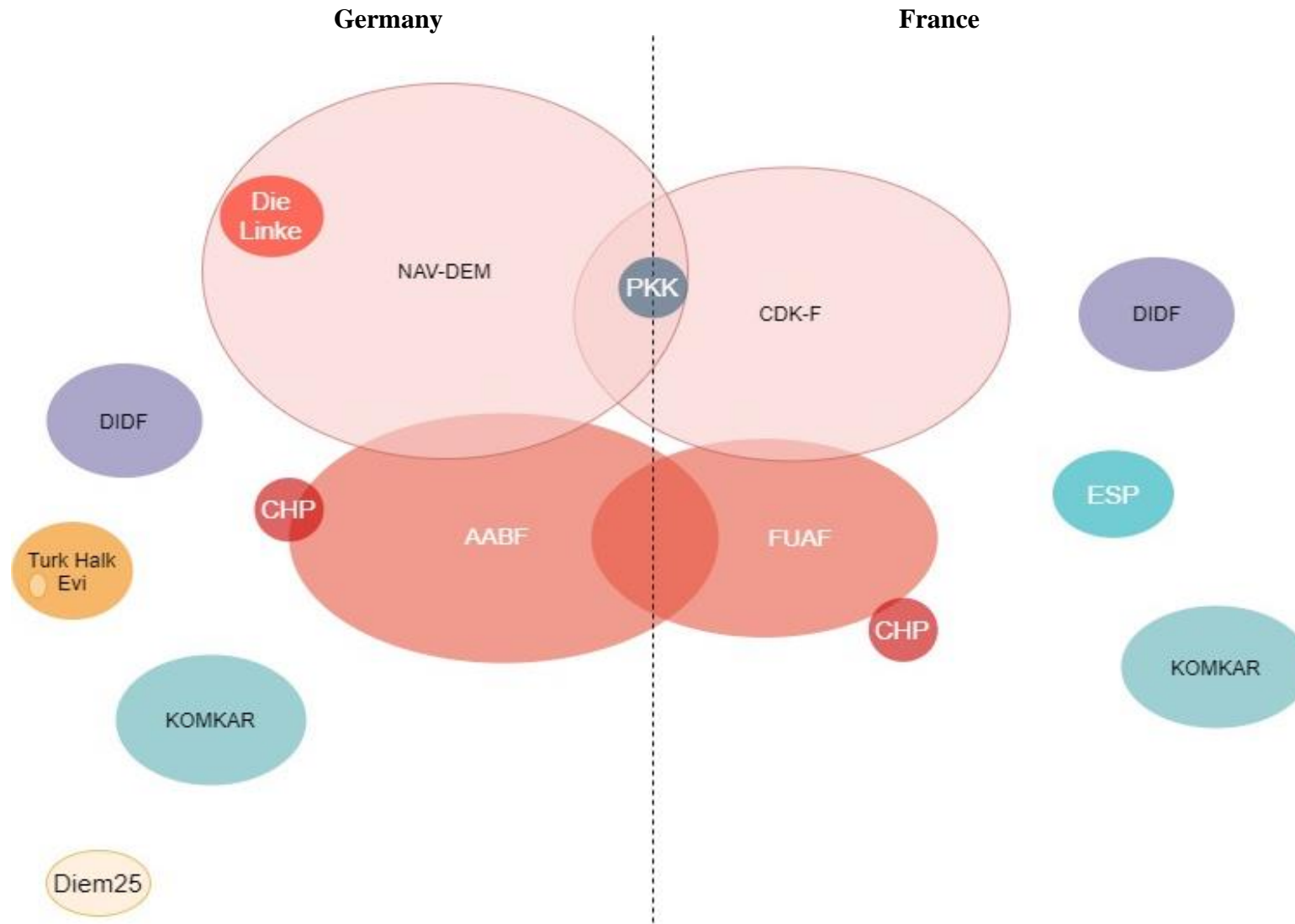**Image 1.** HDP-supporting associations (directly or indirectly) in Germany and France

Image 2. HDP support from AABK's monthly magazine *Alevilerin Sesi* [Front cover]

Source: Alevilerin Sesi (2015, April)

Appendixes

Division of the interview participants into their country cases and organization affiliations

Voting eligibility legend:

(1) Non-citizens: a German or French citizen with Kurdish/Turkish ethnic origin, who has never acquired a Turkish citizenship.

(2) Unnaturalised citizen: a former Turkish citizen with Kurdish/Turkish ethnic origin that has become a German or French citizen willingly, or he/she has been obliged to choose one of the citizenships and intentionally preferred to hold the German or French citizenship.

(3) Refugee: a Turkish citizen with Kurdish/Turkish ethnic origin who resides in Germany and France under refugee status.

Appendix 1: The background of interviewees in Germany

Interviewee #	M/F	Age	Profession	Immigration status	Voting eligibility	Member of/affiliation with	Self-ID	Place of residence	First Interviewed / How?	Multiple interviews
1.	M	41-50	Has own business	Child of an economic migrant of 1960s > German citizen	No (2)	Kurdish Cultural Centre, Dusseldorf	Kurdish-Sunni	Dusseldorf	June 2015, Dusseldorf / Face-to- face	No
2.	M	61-70	PKK Cadre	Political migrant, status unknown	No (3)	PKK – NAV-DEM	Kurdish-Sunni	n/a	September 2017, Essen / Face-to- face	No
3.	M	41-50	n/a	Political migrant in 2000s > German citizen	No (3)	Co-chair, Kurdish Cultural Centre, Essen; Die Linke	Kurdish-Sunni	Essen	September 2017, Essen / Face-to-face 23.06.2017 and 19.06.2018, Essen	Yes
4.	F	41-50	Cleaning lady	Child of an economic migrant of 1960s > Turkish citizen	Yes	Co-chair, Kurdish Cultural Centre, Essen	Kurdish-Alevi	Essen	August 2015, Essen / Face-to- face	No
5.	F	41-50	House maker	Child of an economic migrant of 1960s > German citizen	No (2)	Kurdish Cultural Centre, Essen	Turkish-Sunni	Essen	September 2017, Essen / Face-to- face	No
6.	M	31-40	Baker	Child of an economic migrant of 1960s > Turkish citizen	Yes	Co-chair, Kurdish Cultural Centre, Essen	Kurdish-Sunni	Essen	June 2018, Essen / Face-to- face	Yes
7.	M	31-40	Graduate researcher	resident in Germany following marriage to German citizen > Turkish citizen	Yes	Kurdish Cultural Centre, Essen	Kurdish-Sunni	Essen	September 2015, Essen / Face-to- face	Yes

8.	F	41-50	n/a	Political migrant in 2000s > German citizen	No (2)	NAV-DEM	Kurdish-Sunni	Essen	October 2017, Essen / Face-to- face	Yes
9.	M	21-30	In Turkey was a journalist	Claimed asylum > Refugee status > Turkish citizen	No (3)	In Turkey was in HDP-Istanbul; Kurdish Cultural Centre, Frankfurt; Turk Halkevi	Kurdish-Sunni	Frankfurt	2017, Frankfurt / Face-to-face 14.12.2017	Yes
10.	M	21-30	In Turkey was a mechanic	Claimed asylum > Refugee status > Turkish citizen	No (3)	In Turkey was in HDP-Adana, Kurdish Cultural Centre, Frankfurt	Kurdish-Sunni	Frankfurt	June 2018, Frankfurt / Face-to- face	No
11.	F	31-40	n/a	Political migrant in 1990s	No (2)	Kurdish Women (Civaka Azad), Frankfurt	Kurdish-Alevi	Frankfurt	June 2018, Frankfurt / Face-to- face	Yes
12.	F	41-50	Factory employee	Political migrant in 1990s	Yes	Kurdish Women Alevi organization	Kurdish-Alevi	Frankfurt	June 2018, Frankfurt / Face-to- face	Yes
13.	F	41-50	Owns a cleaning firm with her husband	Political migrant in 1990s	No (2)	Kurdish Women	Kurdish-Alevi	Frankfurt	June 2018, Frankfurt / Face-to- face	Yes
14.	M	41-50	Engineer	n/a	No (2)	Turk Halk Evi; (*Soykırım karşıtları derneği*); Diem25	Kurdish-Alevi	Frankfurt	June 2019, Frankfurt / Face-to- face	Yes
15.	F	31-40	Journalist	Came with a student visa, > German citizen following marriage to a German citizen	No (2)	Turkish Community Centre (Turkish: *Türk Halk Evi)*; Rebuilding HDK (Turkish: *HDK'nın yeniden inşası*) (unpaid)	Kurdish Alevi	Frankfurt	June 2019, Frankfurt / Face-to- face	Yes

16.	M	41-50	Restaurant owner	Political migrant, status unknown	No (3)	Kurdish Cultural Centre, Wuppertal	Kurdish Sunni	Wuppertal	June 2015, Wuppertal / Face-to-face	Yes
17.	M	81-90	Politician, Writer	Political migrant in 1990s, > resident in Germany > Turkish citizen	Yes	KOMKAR, Wuppertal He-Va	Kurdish Sunni	Wuppertal	February 2019, Wuppertal / Face-to-face	No
18.	F	21-30	Student	Grandchild of an economic migrant of 1960s > German citizen	No (1)	KOMKAR Essen	Kurdish Alevi	Essen	July 2018, Essen / Face-to- face	No
19.	M	31-40	Baker	Grandchild of an economic migrant of 1960s > German citizen	No (2)	Kurdish Cultural Centre, Essen; Die Linke	Kurdish Sunni	Essen	September 2015, Essen/ Face-to- face	Yes
20.	M	41-50	Academic	Political migrant in 1990s > German citizen	No (3)	Kurdish Cultural Centre, Cologne	Kurdish Sunni	Cologne	March 2018, Cologne / Face-to-face	Yes
21.	M	50-60	n/a	Political migrant, status unknown	No (3)	NAV-DEM	Kurdish	Frankfurt	/ Face-to-face	No
22.	F	40-50	n/a	Political migrant, status unknown	No (3)	NAV-DEM	Kurdish Alevi	Cologne	/ Face-to-face	No
23.	M	51-60	n/a	n/a	No (3)	NAV-DEM	Kurdish	Bremen	/ Face-to-face	No
24.	M	41-50	Journalist	Grandchild of an economic migrant of 1960s > German citizen	No (2)	AABF Cologne	Turkish Alevi	Cologne	November 2017, Siegen / Face-to-face	Yes
25.	F	51-60	Has own business	Resident in Germany following marriage to German citizen > Turkish citizen	Yes	Alevi Cultural Centre, Wuppertal; CHP NRW	Turkish Alevi	Wuppertal	July 2015, Wuppertal / Face-to-	No
26.	F	31-40	Worker	n/a	Yes	Kurdish Women Council, Hamburg	Turkish Alevi	Hamburg	September 2018, Frankfurt / Face-to-face	No
27.	F	31-40	Teacher	n/a	No (2)	Alevi Women Association	Kurdish Zaza-Alevi	Hamburg	August 2018, Hamburg / phone call	Yes
28.	F	50-55	Waiteress (illegal)	Political migrant, status unknown	No (3)	NAV-DEM	Kurdish	Cologne	October 2018, Hamburg / face-to-	Yes

									face	
29.	F	40-45	Die Linke Social Worker	Grandchild of an economic migrant of 1960s > German citizen	No (1)	NAV-DEM	Kurdish Alevi	Bremen	June 2020, Telegram	Yes
30.	F	45-50	House maker	Resident in Germany following marriage to Turkish citizen with a German residency > Turkish citizen	Yes	CHP supporter	Turkish Sunni	Dusseldorf	July 2019, Face-to-face	No
31.	F	50-55	Kurdish Cultural Centre Essen	Political migrant in 1990s, > resident in Germany > Turkish citizen	Yes	n/a	Kurdish Alevi	Remscheid	Zoom call	No
32.	M	35-40	Handyman	Political migrant in 1990s, > resident in Germany > Turkish citizen	Yes	Alevi Cultural Centre	Kurdish Alevi	Hamburg	Zoom call	No
33.	F	40-50	Has own business	Resident in Germany following marriage to Turkish citizen with a German residency > Turkish citizen	Yes	DIDF	Turkish Alevi	Dortmund	Zoom call	No

Note: Data presented is valid at time of interview.

Appendix 2: The background of interviewees in France

Interviewee #	M/F	Age	Profession	Immigration status	Voting eligibility	Member of/affiliation with	Self-ID	Place of residence	First Interviewed	Multiple interviews
34.	M	41-50	PKK Cadre	n/a	No (3)	PKK – CDK-F	Kurdish-Alevi	n/a	June 2018, Strasbourg / Face-to- face	No
35.	M	41-50	PKK Cadre	n/a	No (3)	PKK – CDK-F	Kurdish-Sunni	n/a	June 2018, Strasbourg / Face-to-face	No
36.	F	41-50	PKK cadre	Political migrant, status unknown	No (3)	PKK	Kurdish-Alevi	France	October 2018, Frankfurt / Face-to-face	No
37.	M	41-50	HDP Foreign Affairs Spokesman for the Strasbourg Parliament (paid), in Turkey was an English teacher.	Political migrant in 1990s > Resident in France > Turkish citizen	Yes	HDP; Kurdish Cultural Centre, Strasbourg	Kurdish-Sunni	Strasbourg	June 2018, Strasbourg / Face-to- face	Yes
38.	F	41-50	HDP European representative (unpaid); Social worker; sworn translator (Turkish-French)	French citizen following husband's granted residency permit in relation to his Assyrian identity > Turkish citizen	Yes	HDP; Kurdish Cultural Centre, Strasbourg	Zazaki-Alevi	Strasbourg	June 2018, Strasbourg / Face-to- face	Yes
39.	M	31-40	PKK	n/a	No (3)	PKK – CDK-F	Kurdish	n/a	June 2018, Paris / Face-to- face	No
40.	F	21-30	BA student (in medicine); Kurdish Women (through) Europe	Child of a political migrant of 2000s > Resident in France > Turkish citizen	Yes	CDK-F Paris; Kurdish Women Paris	Kurdish-Alevi	Paris	June 2018, Paris / Face-to- face	Yes
41.	M	41-50	Academic	n/a > Turkish citizen > French citizen	Yes	Kurdish Cultural Centre, Paris	Kurdish&Yezidi-Sunni	Paris	June 2018, Paris / Face-to- face	Yes
42.	M	51-60	Restaurant Owner	n/a > Turkish citizen	Yes	Socialist Party of the oppressed	Kurdish-Alevi	Paris	June 2018, Paris / Face-to- face	Yes

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					(ESP)					
43.	M	31-40	Unemployed	n/a > resident in France > Turkish citizen	Yes	DIDF	Turkish-Alevi	Strasbourg	June 2018, Strasbourg / Face-to-face	Yes
44.	F	31-40	PhD Student	Student visa > Turkish citizen	Yes	Alevi Cultural Centre, Strasbourg	Kurdish-Alevi	Metz	June 2018, Strasbourg / Face-to-face	Yes
45.	F	41-50	Factory worker	Political migrant in Germany in 1990s > resident in France following marriage to French citizen	Yes	Alevi Cultural Centre, Strasbourg	Kurdish-Alevi	Strasbourg	June 2018, Strasbourg / Face-to-face	Yes
46.	M		Retired construction worker	- > Resident in France > Turkish citizen	Yes	FUAF, Alevi Cultural Centre, Strasbourg	Kurdish-Alevi	Strasbourg	June 2018, Strasbourg / Face-to-face	Yes
47.	M	45-50	Accountant	Student visa > French citizen > Turkish citizen	Yes	Alevi Cultural Centre, Strasbourg	Turkish Alevi	Strasbourg	Face-to-face	Yes
48.	M	50-55	Photographer	Student visa > French citizen > Turkish citizen	Yes	Alevi Cultural Centre, Strasbourg	Turkish Alevi	Strasbourg	Face-to-face	Yes
49.	M	51-60?	Gardener	- > Resident in France > Turkish citizen	Yes	FUAF	Turkish-Alevi	Strasbourg	June 2019, Strasbourg / Face-to-face	Yes
50.	F	51-60	-	-	Yes	FUAF, France Alevi Women	Kurdish-Alevi	Paris	June 2018, Paris / Face-to-face	Yes
51.	F	21-30	MA student	Student visa > Turkish citizen	Yes	CHP supporter	Turkish-Sunni	Strasbourg	June 2018, Strasbourg / Face-to-face	No
52.	M	31-40	Journalist	French citizen following marriage to French citizen > Lebanese citizen	No (1)	n/a	Lebanese-Turkish Armenian	Paris	June 2018, Paris / Face-to-face	Yes
53.	M	50-55	Has own business	Political migrant in 1990s (despite he was a member of MHP, he claimed to be	Yes	IYIP supporter	Turkish Sunni	Paris	June 2018, Paris / Face-to-face	No

				PKK member to get a refugee status > Resident in France > Turkish citizen						
54.	M	45-55	Working class	Child of a political migrant of 1980s > French citizen > Turkish citizen	Yes	DIDF	Turkish	Paris	April 2020, Zoom call	No
55.	F	20-30	Waitress	Child of a political migrant of 1990s > French citizen > Turkish citizen	Yes	FUAF, Alevi Cultural Centre, Paris	Kurdish Alevi	Paris	May 2020 / Zoom call	No
56.	F	45-50	NGO	Political migrant in 1990s > Resident in France > Turkish citizen	Yes	ACTIT	Turkish	Paris	October 2020 / Zoom call	No
57.	F	55-65	Working class	Political migrant in 1990s > French citizen	No (2)	CHP supporter	Turkish Alevi	Paris	August 2020, Zoom call and Telegram	Yes

Note: Data presented is valid at time of interview.

Appendix 3: The background of HDP party elite interviewees

	M/F	Age	Profession	Immigration status	Voting eligibility	Member of/affiliation with	Self-ID, place of origin	Place of residence	First Interviewed	Multiple interviews
58.	M	31-40	Graduate Researcher	n/a > Belgian citizen	Yes	HDP foreign affairs (not paid regularly)	Kurdish Sunni	Brussels	July 2015, Germany / Skype	Yes
59.	F	21-30	NGO	Not valid (Turkey resident)	Yes	HDP-Istanbul (not paid)	Arab-Alevi	Istanbul	May 2015, Istanbul / Face-to-face	Yes
60.	M	40-50	Journalist	Not valid (Turkey resident)	Yes	(not paid)	n/a	Ankara	September, 2018, Ankara / Face-to-face	No
61.	F	21-30	Politician	Child of a political migrant of 1990s > Turkish citizen > Resident in Germany	Yes	HDP (paid), Die Linke	Kurdish Alevi	Hamburg	September 2018, Frankfurt / Face-to-face	Yes

Note: Data presented is valid at time of interview.

Appendix 4: The background of other interviewees

	M/F	Age	Profession	Immigration status	Voting eligibility	Member of/affiliation with	Self-ID, place of origin	Place of residence	First Interviewed	Multiple interviews
62.	M	43	DITIB employee	n/a > Turkish citizen	Yes	DITIB	Turkish Sunni	Duisburg	July 2018	Yes

Note: Data presented is valid at time of interview.

Appendix 5: Observations

	Event	Date	Location	Purpose	Total attendees [333]	Target group	Organisations represented	Form of observation (active or passive)	Period	Notable participants
1.	**Polling clerk**	9-11.05.2015	Turkish Consulate, Dusseldorf	Election	-	Electorates, and the staff	Official staff, party volunteers, Turkish nationals	In person Active	Electoral period	Spoke to over 10 government personnel, and over 20 party volunteers.
2.	**Electorate**	13.05.2015	From Dusseldorf X location to the polling station	To reach the polling station	The volunteer driver and I	Supposedly HDP voters	Kurdish Cultural Centre, Dusseldorf	In person Active	Electoral period	Had informal conversation with the volunteer driver, who became interview participant.
3.	**Electorate**	13.05.2015	From polling station to the Dusseldorf main station	To reach to my home	The driver and 4 passengers	Supposedly HDP voters	Kurdish Cultural Centre, Dusseldorf	In person Active	Electoral period	Had informal conversation with the driver and the passengers.
4.	**Polling clerk**	21-23.05.2015	Turkish Consulate, Cologne	Election	n/a	Electorates, and the staff	Official staff, party volunteers, Turkish nationals	In person Active	Electoral period	Spoke to over 10 government personnel, and over 20 party volunteers.

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[333] It was not possible to estimate the demographic profile of the attendees, when possible is indicated with parentheses.

5.	**Celebration**	07.06.2015	Marktplatz, Wuppertal	Election result celebration	500-600	HDP sympathizers	NAV-DEM, AABF, Turkish nationals	In person Passive	Post-election	Had informal conversation with around 5 people. Some of them became my interviewees.
6.	**Ballot box record analyzes**	07-10.06.2015	At home, Wuppertal	Record of the expat ballots were checked	n/a	Volunteers who had access to an internet access and a laptop/pc	Volunteers	Online, Active	Post-election	n/a
7.	**Rally[334]**	26.09.2015	Leverkusen	Rally for the HDP	n/a	HDP sympatisers	NAV-DEM	In person, Passive	Electoral Period	
8.	**Polling clerk**	10-14.10.2015	Essen	Election	n/a	Electorates, and the staff	Official staff, party volunteers, Turkish nationals	In person, Active	Electoral period	Had informal conversation with around 10 people, mostly AKP and MHP members.
9.	**Polling clerk**	22.10.2015	Turkish Consulate, Dusseldorf	Election	n/a	Electorates, and the staff	Official staff, party volunteers, Turkish nationals	In person, Active	Electoral period	Had informal conversation with around 5 people, mostly with the 2 government personnel Imams who were attained to the ballot box I was observing.
10.	**Celebration**	1.11.2015	Kurdish Cultural Centre, Essen	Election result celebration	80	HDP sympathizers		In person, Passive	Post-election	Had informal conversation with around 10 people. Many interview participants were in attendance.

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[334] https://www.arti49.com/selahattin-demirtas-almanyada-332400h.htm

11. Ballot box record analyses	01-03.11.2015	At home, Wuppertal	Record of the expat ballots were checked	n/a	Volunteers who had access to an internet access and a laptop/pc	Volunteers	Online, Active	Post-election	n/a
12. Rally[335]	25.05.2018	Alevi Cultural Centre, Wuppertal	Rally for the CHP and HDP	n/a	CHP and HDP sympathizers	n/a	In person, passive	Pre-electoral period	n/a
13. Polling clerk	9-11.06.2018	DITIB – central, Strasbourg	Election	n/a	Electorates, and the staff	Official staff, party volunteers, Turkish nationals	In person, Active	Electoral period	Had informal conversation with around 15 people including other party volunteers, 6 of which became my interview participants. Some other interviewees were in attendance.
14. Electorate	09.06.2018	DITIB – Central, Strasbourg	Election	n/a	Eligible voters	Official staff, party volunteers, Turkish nationals	In person, Active	Electoral period	n/a
15. Polling clerk	13-16.06.2018	Turkish Embassy, Paris	Election	n/a	Electorates, and the staff	Official staff, party volunteers, Turkish nationals	In person, Active	Electoral period	Had informal conversation with around 20 people, 6 of which became my interview participants. Had extended informal conversation with IYIP observer, who was an ex-MHP member. Some other interviewees were in attendance.

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[335] https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=1863857720589691&set=pb.100008964427039.-2207520000..&type=3&theater

16. **Celebration**	24.06.2018	Alevi Cultural Centre, Wuppertal	Election result celebration	40	Association members	Alevi Cultural Centre, Wuppertal	In person, Passive	Post-election	Had informal conversation with around 6 people. Some other interviewees were in attendance.
17. **Ballot box record analyses**	25.06.2018	Wuppertal	Record of the expat ballots were checked	n/a	Volunteers who had access to an internet access and a laptop/pc	Volunteers	Online, Active	Post-election	n/a
18. **Local activity**	07.07.2018	Alevi Cultural Centre, Wuppertal	Seassonal fairwell party	120	Association members	Alevi Cultural Centre, Wuppertal	In person, Active	Electoral-free period	Had informal conversation with about 10 people. Had extended conversation with the *Ana.* Some other interviewees were in attendance.
19. **Yol Bir Sürek Binbir - Einheit in Vielfalt**[336]	28.09.2018	Lanxess Arena, Cologne	30th year anniversary of AABF	15.000	Mostly Alevis, but from various groups not limited to diaspora organisations	AABF and AABK	In person, Passive	Electoral-free period	Had informal conversation with around 25 people, 5 became interviewee. I was with the FUAF Alsace group. Many interview participants of FUAF and AABF form both countries in attendance.

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[336] See more information about the event at the following link: https://www.evrensel.net/haber/387923/avrupa-alevi-birlikleri-federasyonu-30-kurulus-yil-donumunu-kutladi

20. **Protest**[337]	29.09.2018	Ebertplatz, Cologne	Protests against Recep Tayyip Erdogan's visit	n/a	Various oppositional diaspora organisations from Turkey	Various oppositional diaspora organisations from Turkey	In person, Passive	Electoral-free period	Had informal conversation with around 15 people.
21. **Revolution in the Making, International Women's Conference**[338]	6-7.10.2018	Goethe University, Frankfurt	International Women's Conference	500	Various women organisations from around the world	The Kurdish Women Movement Germany and France	In person, Passive	Electoral-free period	Had informal conversation with around 30 people, 6 became my interview participants. Had extended informal conversations with HDP's exile MPs and mayors, numbered 3.
22. **Conference attendee**	6-8.10.2018	Frankfurt	Accommodation for the conference	n/a	Conference attendee	Kurdish women, Frankfurt member hosted me	In person, Active	Electoral-free period	Had informal conversations with my host and his politically active 5 extended family members.
23. **Association opening**	13.01.2019	Hevi-Hoffnung, Wuppertal	Breakfast, opening	90	KOMKAR sympathizers	KOMKAR affiliated Hevi-Hoffnung Sympatizers Wuppertal	In person, Passive	Electoral-free period	Had informal conversations with 5 people, some interviewees in attendance.

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[337] See more information about the event at the following link: https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=1961419037500225&set=pb.100008964427039.-2207520000..&type=3&theater

[338] See more information about the event at the following link: https://anfenglish.com/women/international-women-conference-in-frankfurt-taking-shape-29588

See more information about the event at the following links: https://anfenglishmobile.com/women/revolution-in-the-making-final-resolution-30102 http://revolutioninthemaking.blogsport.eu/

24. **Newroz celebration**	**2020**	Alevi Cultural Centre, Wuppertal	Welcoming spring via Alevi tradition	700	Open to everyone	Alevi Cultural Centre, Wuppertal	In person, Passive	Electoral-free period	Had informal conversation with 3 people, many interview participants attended.
25. **Youth festival**	07.2020	Alevi Cultural Centre, Strasbourg		90	Association members	Alevi Cultural Centre, Strasbourg	In person, Passive	Electoral-free period	Had informal conversation with 7 people, 3 became my interview participants. Many interviews in attendance.
26. **Local engagement**	22.02 - 14.03.2020	Kurdish Institute Paris	Making use of the library	15	Open to everyone	Kurdish Institute Paris	In person, active and passive	Electoral-free period	Had informal conversation with 15 people, 3 became my interview participants.
27. **Local engagement**	09., 11.-2019, 02.-03.2020	Centre for Middle East Studies, EHESS	Making use of the PhD office	5	Open to the guest scholars and PhD students/candidates of the Centre for Middle East Studies, EHESS	Centre for Middle East Studies, EHESS	In person, active and passive	Electoral-free period	Had informal conversation with 4 people, 1 became my interview participant.

Résumé

Cette recherche s'intéresse à la mobilisation transnationale de la diaspora autour du vote externe et à l'implication des organisations diasporiques dans le processus électoral du pays d'origine. Plusieurs approches expliquent la transnationalisation politique des groupes diasporiques ; cependant, elles ne parviennent pas à clarifier (1) comment certains moments historiques (par exemple, l'extension du droit de vote aux nationaux non résidents) peuvent générer un élan critique parmi les différentes communautés de la diaspora et (2) comment les réseaux de ces communautés interagissent à travers des organisations diasporiques pour la même cause, malgré leur appartenance à différents espaces sociaux transnationaux, et créent un microcosme (par exemple, un parti politique) et élargissent la signification des espaces sociaux construits. Le rôle des organisations diasporiques, qui a été analysé de manière approfondie pour leur engagement dans les courants politiques du pays d'origine, n'avait pas été étudié auparavant en utilisant le vote externe. Enquêter sur le succès électoral extraterritorial d'un parti politique nouvellement créé offre une occasion exemplaire de souligner l'importance des organisations diasporiques enracinées et de leurs membres qui se transforment en groupes partisans au cours d'un moment historique tel que le vote externe. Cette combinaison d'instances conduit à la mobilisation des électeurs. Un parti politique turc, le Parti démocratique des peuples (HDP), et ses alliances à distance, dans un tel moment, ont démontré et utilisé leur capacité de mobilisation, comme en témoigne la part de vote extraterritorial du HDP aux élections générales turques de 2015, qui a fait du parti le deuxième plus fort à l'étranger. En revanche, selon les résultats des élections nationales, le parti est arrivé en quatrième position. Par conséquent, le HDP devient un cas d'étude plausible pour comprendre un modèle complexe d'organisation à distance d'un parti politique opérant en l'absence de responsables ou de satellites du parti dans les pays de résidence, l'Allemagne et la France, où la population née en Turquie et ses descendants sont les plus nombreux en dehors de la Turquie. Dans ces pays, le HDP obtient toujours un soutien remarquable, par les organisations majoritairement indépendantes et différentes sur le plan ethnique, religieux et politique, qui ont diverses interstices qui les ont amenées à générer un microcosme. L'étude examine les incitations des organisations et des individus de la diaspora à devenir des alliances/partisans pro-HDP en Allemagne et en France et se demande si l'éligibilité au vote a un impact sur les modes d'engagement politique dans le cas du vote externe. Ce faisant, cette étude contribue aux études sur le vote externe en analysant la mobilisation transnationale de la diaspora à un niveau institutionnel et individuel. En outre, cette recherche contribue à la compréhension du vote externe, limité aux électeurs éligibles, en fournissant des preuves empiriques qui soulignent que les opportunités d'engagement non électoral qui émergent avec le vote externe n'excluent pas les non-votants.

Mots-clés : Transnationalisme, mobilisation de la diaspora, vote externe, Turquie, élections, Allemagne, France, HDP

Abstract

This research is concerned with transnational diaspora mobilisation around external voting and diaspora organisations' involvement in the homeland electoral process. There are several approaches that explain the political transnationalisation of the diasporic groups; yet, they fail to clarify (1) how some historical moments (e.g., extending the voting right to non-resident nationals) can generate a critical momentum among the various diaspora communities and (2) how these community' networks intermingle through diaspora organisations for the same cause, despite belonging to different transnational social spaces, and create a microcosm (e.g., a political party) and expand the meaning of social spaces.

The role of the diaspora organisations, which have been analysed extensively for their engagements in trajectories of homeland-originating political orientations, has not been studied using external voting. Investigating the exterritorial electoral success of a newly established political party would offer an exemplary opportunity to underline the significance of the rooted diaspora organisations and their members who could turn into partisan groups in the course of a historical moment such as external voting. This combination of instances would lead to the mobilisation of the voters.

A political party from Turkey, Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP), and its remote alliances, in such a moment, demonstrated and made use of their mobilising capacity, as is reflected in the extraterritorial vote share of the HDP in the Turkish general elections of 2015, which made the party the second strongest abroad. In contrast, according to the in-country election results, the party got fourth place. Therefore, the HDP becomes a plausible case study party for understanding a complex model of remote organization of a political party operating in the absence of party officials or satellites in the countries of residence, Germany and France, where the Turkish-born population and its descendants are the largest outside Turkey. The HDP in these countries still gains remarkable support, by the mostly independent and different ethnic, belief, and political organisations which have various interstices that led them to generate a microcosm. The study examines the incentives of the diaspora organisations and individuals to become pro-HDP alliances/partisans in Germany and France and asks if voting eligibility impacts the patterns of political engagement in the case of external voting. In doing so, this study contributes to external voting studies by analysing transnational diaspora mobilisation at an institutional and individual level. Furthermore, this research advances the understanding of external voting, that is limited to eligible voters, by providing empirical evidence that underlines the non-electoral engagement opportunities that emerge with external voting do not exclude non-voters.

Keywords: Transnationalism, diaspora mobilisation, external voting, Turkey, elections, Germany, France, HDP